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COLLEGE

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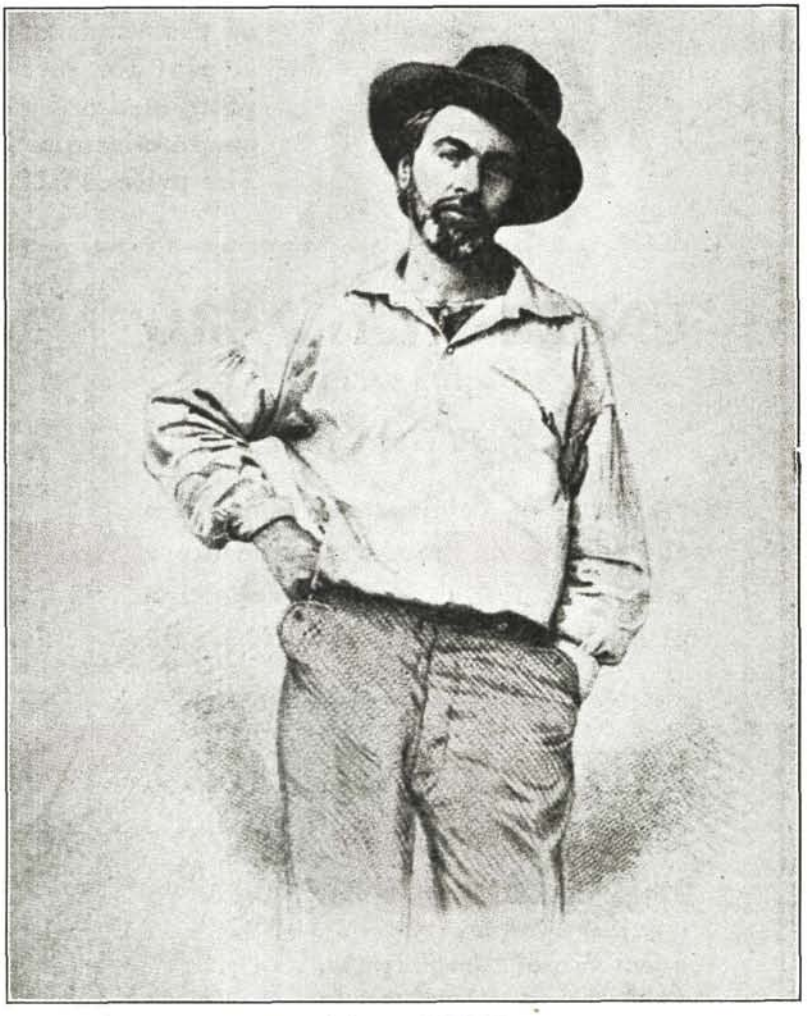

WALT WHITMAN
From the first edition of "Leaves of Grass"

"He dressed as a common man; . . . he wrote reviews of his own book, in which he carefully explained that American life was his sole source". . . *(See page 3)*

THE BOY LEAVES HOME *By Clyde Brion Davis*

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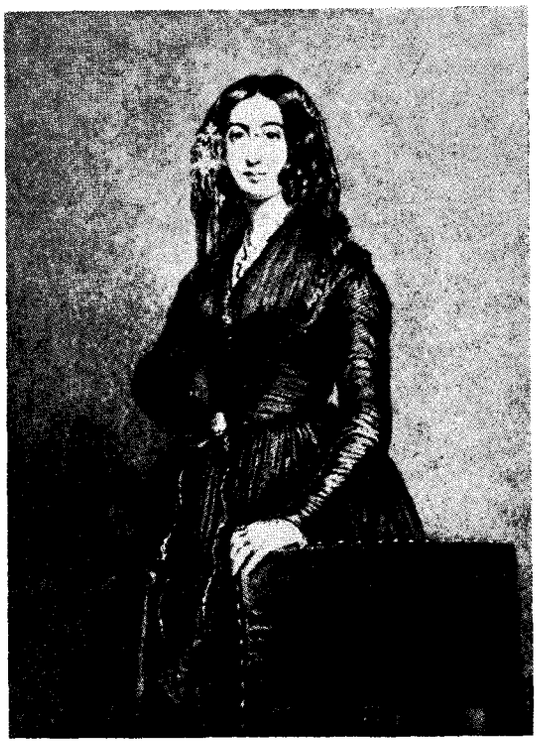
Grains of Sand in "Leaves of Grass"



GEORGE SAND

WALT WHITMAN'S POSE. By Esther Shephard. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938. $3.75.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

SOME years ago John Livingston Lowes, in his powerful study of Coleridge, transformed the grubby tool of Ph.D. source-seekers into a noble instrument for the interpreting of the creative imagination. Miss Shephard has attempted a like feat. She has discovered a source, an important source, for Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," which also explains some of his puzzling self-dramatization. But her discovery, as she freely admits, leaves the poetic power, and indeed the poetic inspiration, of Whitman, as much of a mystery as poetic power of any magnitude usually proves to be. It scarcely concerns the achievements by which the quite conventional carpenter-poet and politician-journalist of the '40s became an eccentric original who, because of the genius in his eccentricity, was the spokesman of an ideal for humanity, if not the true voice of democracy and America. What she has explained by her discovery is a cause for the eccentric egoism and curious secretiveness which have puzzled Whitman's biographers and made even his admirers wonder whether there was not some humbug in his genius.

The book is long, repetitive, involved, and unnecessarily argumentative. As the author says, only a conviction of Whitman's very great importance could justify such a web of dialectics based upon such a mass of intricate evidence. Briefly, perhaps too briefly, her argument runs as follows:—Something happened to Whitman in the obscure years before 1855 and the first publication of "Leaves of Grass." He would have us believe that it was his discovery of the all-powerful love of man for man as the universal solvent for human ill and error. He would have us understand that he found this love in democracy as democracy was understood in America. In order to establish this legend he dressed as a common man, one of the *en masse;* he wrote reviews of his own book, in which he carefully explained that American life was his sole source, and that he was a great original, independent of foreign books and foreign thought; he edited letters written to him and to be published about him with the same purpose; he invented love affairs in the South and illegitimate children, exaggerated his war experience, cultivated the society of bus men and street-car conductors, and made his life a pose of the good gray poet, the friend and lover of democracy, who spoke for man and particularly for the Americano.

Actually two important things had happened to him. An ardent believer in phrenology, he was convinced by the chart of his bumps that he had the ideal mental and spiritual equipment to speak for the *en masse*, for all humanity. Next he read the epilogue to "The Countess of Rudolstadt" by George Sand, a sequel to "Consuelo." In this epilogue, couched in the high-flung idealistic jargon of the *illuminés*, he found a poet and visionary, Trismegistus, who, in ecstasy, describes the future of the world, when the trinity of sensation, sentiment, and knowledge, which differentiates man from the animals, will be realized upon earth, first by destruction of existing institutions, then by a recreation of society through love.

Trismegistus cried:

> "Am I not *man?* Why should I not say what human nature demands, and what it will consequently realize? Yes, I am man; therefore I can say what *man* wishes, and what he can effect; and what he will effect . . . I am *man*, and am in contact with the humanity of my times . . . Man is equal to man. Human nature is comprehended, recognized, sanctified. Man is free, equal, and brother. There is no longer any other definition of man."

Now, Walt, reading this, and thumbing through the French original where he seems to have picked up his "en masse," his "allons," and other French tags which have puzzled his commentators, remembered his phrenological assurances and saw in this advocacy of the religion of man his function; for was he not, by this same chart, shown to be the greatest of lovers? But also, since man for him was primarily the Americano, it was important that the foreign source of his inspiration should be concealed; and did not his phrenological chart also indicate caution as one of his prime attributes? So he would cover up the origins of his transforming task of the poet of a new religion, by refusing even to quote or mention foreign authors in his work, by insisting, on every manufactured opportunity, that his inspiration for the "Leaves" came from life, not books, and by confessing only to his intimates that he had some secret which burdened his soul.

The argument is plausible, and if not

Next Week

THE CULTURE OF CITIES
By LEWIS MUMFORD
Reviewed by Crane Brinton

IN THE FINE SUMMER WEATHER
By CATHERINE WHITCOMB
Reviewed by William Maxwell

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overstressed, sound. Whitman failed to destroy in his caution one quotation, and a key one, from "The Countess of Rudolstadt," written in his own hand. He has paraphrased passages from that chapter, and the confident assertion of Trismegistus that he speaks for a new religion of man has a close relation to the new confidence and enthusiasm of Whitman which makes "Leaves of Grass" so different from his earlier work. And there is abundant evidence that he went out of the straight path of truth again and again in order to prevent snoopers from discovering that he had been reading and borrowing as well as doing in the years just before his great book appeared.

But it is hard to escape the conclusion that theatrical old Walt would have been obscenely pleased by Miss Shephard's book.

> Do I contradict myself?
> Very well, then I contradict myself,
> I am large, I contain multitudes.

All this pother to discover that, like many a good medium, he would fake whenever he needed to fake. And yet I do not mean to belittle the usefulness of the book. It does not in my judgment, and I have read the Epilogue to "The Countess of Rudolstadt" with great care, prove that Whitman's consecration of his as yet unaroused spiritual energies to the cause of the love of man for man, was dependent upon the transcendental story in that book. There is too much about equality and too little about love to sound more than ten per cent Whitmanesque, too much masonic mysticism and advocacy of violence. A spark passed there; but there was an even fatter spark, as Miss Shephard partly admits, from Emerson. The discovery does, however, give a possible explanation, though some of the argument sounds like a detective story, for one line of Whitman's clowning. And it knocks in the head (if that is important) his boasts that he drew for the "Leaves" only from life.

In short, this is a more important contribution to biography than to literary criticism. Whitman's next biographer will have to take account of and reweigh Miss Shephard's discovery. By that time, I have little doubt that there will be still more evidence that the consummate egoist lied about his independence of the world's store of culture. Most self-styled independents do. But we who, in spite of our great admiration of Whitman, have always thought that there was some humbug in his cosmos, now have another duplicity to chuckle over. But grant the faker and the showman in the ample genius of Walt, and it does not seem quite so serious as Miss Shephard seems to think.

Lion-Hunting for Radio

HELLO AMERICA! By César Saerchinger. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1938. $3.50.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

WHILE reporting the London Naval Conference early in 1930 for American newspapers, César Saerchinger saw a radio microphone for the first time and felt as though he had confronted his Fate. A few months later he was appointed European representative by the Columbia Broadcasting System and thus became "the first foreign emissary of radio." The following years were crowded for him with pioneering adventure in radio journalism and radio showmanship—the two overlap and blend—as he labored mightily to haul great personalities and great events within earshot of radio listeners in America.

His book, "Hello America!", is an exciting and intelligent record of that intense experience. Its primary interest for the average reader will be in the fascinating gallery of celebrities that Mr. Saerchinger offers: rulers, statesmen, intellectual big-wigs, religious leaders. He exhibits them with a keen eye for dramatic effect, and mostly in their humanly defenseless moments in front of a radio "mike." The two people with the largest curiosity appeal for the American public when Mr. Saerchinger began his career as transoceanic impresario were the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII), and George Bernard Shaw. He "bagged" the Prince quickly enough, partly by accident. Shaw eluded him for more than a year, but finally fell, in a broadcast on Russia in which he delighted Americans by addressing them as "you boobs, you dear old boobs."

With that, Mr. Saerchinger writes, "the last of the intellectual Big Game in the British Isles had been bagged. My eyes began to drift to wider fields." The hunting was no less arduous and no less thrilling on the Continent, and he carries the reader through the triumphs and heartaches and competitive struggles of his years. The Pope, Leon Trotsky, President Masaryk, Gandhi, Amelia Earhart, dictators and democrats, conferences, wars, great sports events: Mr. Saerchinger caught their reflections in his microphone, so that his book of staccato reminiscences sums up the highlights of these years.

Beyond that, however, he conveys effectively the significance of radio as a new journalistic medium and as a force for great good and even greater evil in international relations. Radio was hailed

JACKET OF "HELLO AMERICA"
Showing Edward VIII, Mussolini, Shaw, Trotsky, Hitler, Baldwin, Princess Juliana, and Pope Pius XI.

as the instrument by which "nation might speak peace unto nation," but the things it speaks are as often war and hatred as peace and love. Chemistry gave the world poison gas along with its civilized gifts, and radio is giving the world poison propaganda along with culture and a sense of human neighborliness around the globe.

Mr. Saerchinger is convinced that radio has advantages over ordinary newspaper reporting. It brings people and events to the far-off audience more vividly and directly than any newspaper dispatch can do. His accounts of radio journalism in recent years—in Ethiopia, at the Olympic Games, in the Spanish civil war, etc.—indicate the potentialities of this new supplementary type of reporting.

That development should underline, for Americans, the importance of maintaining the independence of radio broadcasting. In the light of radio's growing importance as a news channel, it is essential that our concept of freedom of the press be extended to include radio.

Genuine transoceanic broadcasting is only about eight years old. It is characteristic of our blasé age that already we accept this modern miracle as casually as we do the telephone or the airplane. It is not the least of the many virtues of Mr. Saerchinger's fine book that it makes us keenly aware of this youngest of our scientific miracles. After reading "Hello America!" one will never again listen in on Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, or South America without a thrilling sense of the magic of the achievement, and without a deep appreciation of the labors of men like Mr. Saerchinger who carry through such broadcasts.

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Comic Genius of Music

ORPHEUS IN PARIS: Offenbach and the Paris of His Time. By S. Kracauer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $4.

LA VIE PARISIENNE, A Tribute to Offenbach. By Sacheverell Sitwell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1938. $1.65.

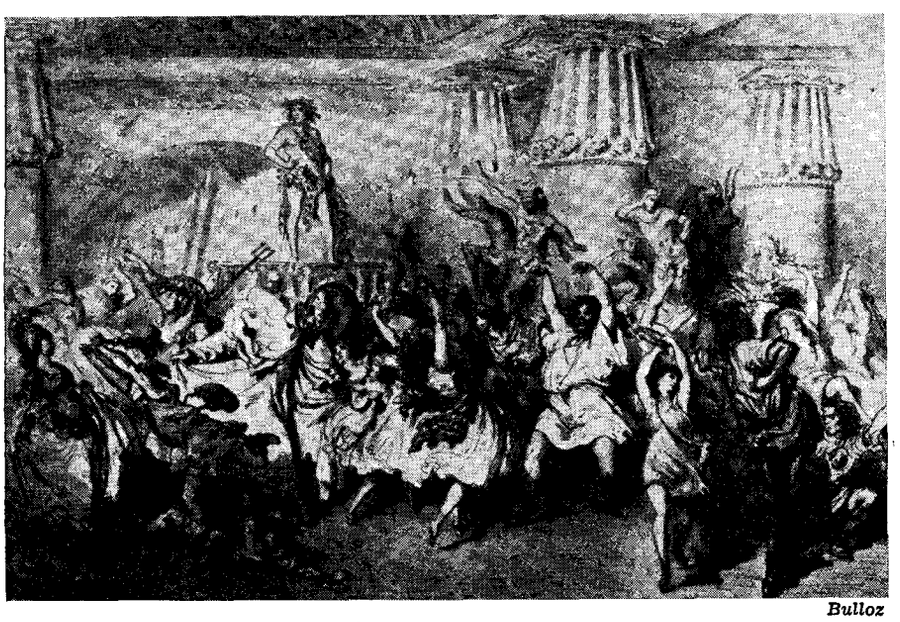
Reviewed by MARCIA DAVENPORT

JACQUES OFFENBACH, as all the world knows, was a Cologne-born German Jew who carried his unique musical gifts to Paris as a starveling boy of fourteen, and remained to become the most authentically Parisian of Second-Empire Boulevardiers. The two gentlemen who have had the apparently simultaneous idea of writing about Offenbach, in new books just published, have not succeeded in submerging their native personalities nearly so well as their subject did. Not that they should; but neither the carefully embroidered, vignetted British prose of Sacheverell Sitwell, nor the solid, sociological German scholarship of S. Kracauer has produced much vitality in a portrait of the composer himself. Mr. Sitwell's book is not intended as more than a fragrant tribute to the man he calls the comic genius of music, blended into a colorful and nostalgic backdrop of that fantastic era of Paris. Mr. Kracauer's book is clearly the result of protracted study and analysis; of detailed and painstaking research, and of a highly enlightened mind.

Especially at this time, no observant writer could discuss the turbulent second half of the nineteenth century in Europe without taking fullest cognizance of the deep social significance of the violent political currents which swept the world. Mr. Kracauer does this, keeping constantly before his reader the basic forces of social evolution which brought about the present French Republic, and stressing the "dictatorship" of Louis Napoleon as one of its compelling elements. Above this foundation he rebuilds the Paris of that age; the glittering, heedless, vicious, money-crazy Paris of the new industrialists, their cronies, and their courtesans; the Paris of the Boulevards, of the theaters, and of stupendous carousals. His book is richly peopled, in greatest detail, with these personalities. No available minutiæ in anecdote and description of these fantastic men and women appears to have been overlooked, for which reason the absence of such intimate details in respect to Offenbach himself is quite startling. It is possible that the abundant source material does not yield any such first-hand memorials of Offenbach, and that is a great pity, for Mr. Kracauer's book only misses in that respect being a remarkable piece of work.

Offenbach's music is the accompaniment. There the writer comes into his own, with a notable comprehension of the very real contribution made by this lovable eccentric to the permanent literature of music. One finds the greatest satisfaction in the entire reading in the author's graph of Offenbach's career. The early painful hardships and obscurities, the first and then the subsequent successes, the incredible triumphs of "Orphée," "La Belle Hélène," "La Vie Parisienne," and "The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein," the breathless pressure of work, at the behest of public taste, which resulted in a total of one hundred operettas, written at dizzy speed and under every sort of condition, auspicious and disastrous, from adulation to bankruptcy. Then the saddening and inevitable decline; the displacement of Offenbach, father of the operetta, by Strauss, its Viennese godfather, and finally the extraordinary story behind the creation of "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," Offenbach's sole grand opera. Mr. Kracauer's research is so painstaking and so authoritative that his omission of the majority of weird anecdotes that have grown up around "Les Contes d'Hoffmann" leads one to concede that most of them must be apocryphal, however picturesque. Finally, the pathetic death of Offenbach, only a few weeks before the première of the work into which he had poured his last ounce of life, makes a memorable (and typical, in musical annals) conclusion to a rich and fascinating book. If this book lacks almost entirely the personal touch of intimacy with Offenbach, the man, and his wife Herminie, it lacks little else to make it valuable to anyone concerned with opera. It is profusely illustrated with contemporary prints and caricatures, and it contains a useful and complete bibliography, as well as an index. Mr. Sitwell's book, on the other hand, like his other writings on music, is frankly the gesture of an intelligent dilettante.

Marcia Davenport is the author of "Mozart," a biography, and "Of Lena Geyer," a musical novel.



Bulloz

BACCHANALE FROM "ORPHÉE AUX ENFERS." *From the painting by Doré.*

On the Battlefields

JOURNEYS BETWEEN WARS. By John Dos Passos. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by GEORGE SLOCOMBE

MR. DOS PASSOS'S epic "Three Soldiers" had something of the excitement of emotion remembered in the tranquillity of a hall bedroom in New York. The rich panorama unfolded, the fireworks filled the sky, the air of the quiet room was acrid with the smell of burnt powder, but the mind of the man who sat before his typewriter was still, orderly, and contemplative, that of a sad, unresentful Homer.

In "Journeys between Wars" the Homer has become Odysseus. The pageant is there, but the writer is no longer serenely objective. The poet has become wanderer. The names of his voyages, cities, companions, roll off his tongue and are expectorated like sunflower seeds. Spain in 1919 and 1920, when a younger and more eager Dos Passos saw Don Quixote in every lean Spanish philosopher and Rosinante in every starved Spanish mule. Constantinople in 1921, when Mustafa Kemal was busy revitalizing the corpse of the Ottoman Empire, and the capital of the dead or exiled Sultans was full of Russians, Greeks, Armenians, British Intelligence officers, and American newspaper correspondents. Angora, Teheran, the Arabian desert.

Mr. Dos Passos's tales of the desert re-

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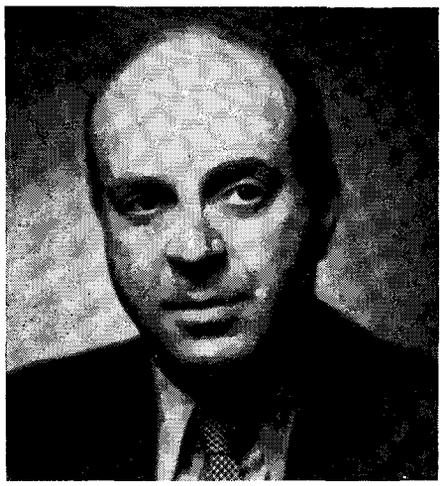


Pinchot

JOHN DOS PASSOS

call Burton rather than Lawrence. They are rapid, ejaculatory, highly accented. But in the main the one characteristic phenomenon of the desert is absent from this otherwise rich and anecdotal diary—the quality of stillness and emptiness. Something of the noisy conflict in the writer's mind, a conflict not stilled even by the reading of Juvenal in a windy cave while his clothes dried, has spilled over into all the characters and scenes in this narrative of a pilgrimage, and there are no silences in it.

Nor is there any real continuity in the book, until it approaches the chapters which deal exclusively with Spain, and which the author entitles "Introduction to Civil War: 1916-1937."

Unlike many observers of the Spanish Civil War, Mr. Dos Passos feels its tragedy too deeply to allow his perception to be distorted by anger, or his reason to be blinded by enthusiasm. There is pity but not rage even in his terse and terrible story of the massacre of the humble anarchists at Casas Viejas, one of the acts which nearly wrecked the Republic of 1931. And his sense of the sublime futility of Basque fishermen and Asturian miners and Catalan anarchists attempting to resist the Italo-German-Moorish forces of Franco is expressed in the final soliloquy: "How can they win? . . . How can the new world full of confusion and cross purposes and illusions and dazzled by the mirage of idealistic phrases win against the iron combination of men accustomed to run things who have only one idea binding them together, to hold on to what they've got?"

Although Mr. Dos Passos's notes on Spain in 1937 seem still sharp and sensitive and faithful to us, his travel diaries of the immediate post-war years seem curiously inconsequential, and the pictures they evoke unfamiliar, and out of focus, like photographs taken in a bad light or with a distorting lens.

George Slocombe, a British correspondent, is the author of several books, including "The Dangerous Sea," "The Tumult and the Shouting," and "A Mirror to Geneva."

Ambitious Sharecropper

LAND WITHOUT MOSES. By Charles Curtis Munz. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by EUGENE ARMFIELD

MANY readers, even those ordinarily not interested in novels about Southern sharecroppers, should enjoy this one. Enjoy isn't precisely the right word, for the life sharecroppers lead is not pretty. Its circumstances are sordid and violent. But Kirby Moten, the hero, if he can be called that, is appealing in his struggle against ignorance and dirt and oppression. His courage, sustained even through defeat, gives breadth and meaning to a story whose details are all the more appalling because we know, from many sources, that Mr. Munz has presented one phase of American life with scrupulous accuracy.

"Land without Moses" follows the life of Kirby Moten from his first rebellion, at the age of twelve, against his father's submission to the landlord, through his own constant attempts to escape the same landlord's domination, to the birth of his first child, who comes into the world as Kirby, because of the harsh logic of the circumstances, falls back into peonage. Herein lies the most impressive single thing about the novel: the author's ability to set forth, without ranting or preaching, the fierce clash between a human being and a relentless social force.

It must not be supposed, by any means, that Mr. Munz has written a social tract. If one insists on the underlying theme, it is merely to give some indication of the book's quality. "Land without Moses" is first of all an extremely readable story about people who are very much alive. The complications of Kirby's unceasing rebellion against his landlord, his repeated attempts to reach Habishaw County, where every man owns his own farm, are exciting without being melodramatic. Throughout the book there are many episodes told with real skill, which would of themselves make the novel worth reading.

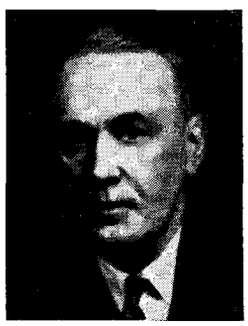
"Land without Moses" is not a perfect novel. Some of its characters remain flat and some of its incidents go off at a tangent to the main theme. Its admirable qualities far outweigh its occasional lapses, however. Not the least admirable is the excellent writing which, by avoiding both the "poetic" and the "starkly realistic," manages to convey clearly the feelings of the characters—no mean feat since these people are unlettered and inarticulate—and their imaginative relationship to the harsh world they live in.

People in a Boom Town

A PRAYER FOR TOMORROW. By J. Hyatt Downing. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

MR. DOWNING'S first novel has a sober earnestness that is worthy of its tragic theme. The real protagonist is the town of Rudge, located in the arid section of South Dakota. Rudge falls victim to the American delirium in which visions of magnificence tantalize the sufferer. In its hysterical passion for "getting on," Rudge attempts to do itself over from a cattle country into an agricultural community. There is a moment of false splendor. Everyone imagines himself to be rich. Rudge babbles fatuously of becoming another Chicago. Then the hot winds come and the rains do not come. The crops are ruined; the banks fail; the boom is over. Rudge lies in a pitiful state of collapse.



J. HYATT DOWNING

It is a significant story, the essential elements of which appear in many small personal histories as well as in our great national catastrophes.

Since the story of a community's collapse must resolve itself into the tragedies of individuals, Mr. Downing offers several variations on his theme that reveal themselves in the life of the banker, the lumberman, the farmer. None of these contributory streams of narration, however, quite develops the power one continually expects from page to page.

The writing of the book shows great facility. A more experienced hand would have snipped away some of the verbal embroidery of the style, but it remains one that is well adapted to the telling of vigorous stories of American life. When Hyatt Downing writes his next novel, he will make less use of the stock characters of fiction; he will also clear away the atmosphere of misty sentimentality. But his is a masculine talent and a valuable one. To take his place among the vigorous interpreters of contemporary life, he needs only to acquire confidence in the use of his instrument so that it may truly serve his insight.

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Gallic Don Juan

PITY FOR WOMEN. By Henry de Montherlant. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

PAUL MORAND, who should know, once called the French *professionels de l'amour,* implying thereby that the rest of Europe and America could only claim amateur status in the oldest of sports. Every so often a book such as this highly provocative novel comes along to demonstrate that there is much truth in this observation.

M. de Montherlant's hero is a literary man who does not believe in sentimental love. He is a devil of a fellow, a sort of latter-day Don Juan with sadistic improvements. His feminine admirers are numerous, and bore him to death most of the time. There is a little peasant girl who stumbles on one of his books, writes him an adoring letter in which her mysticism confounds admiration for the writer with love of God. He answers her, and she goes mad. A longer correspondence unites him with an unprepossessing but intelligent young woman from the provinces. After an interview or two she falls in love with the writer, to his disgust, and comes to bang on his Paris door at inopportune moments. Meanwhile (O miracle!) he has discovered a completely natural person, beautiful and lacking in feminine malice, —in fact just his cup of tea, as he so succinctly puts it. The various stages in this third relationship are painstakingly exposed to the reader, with due attention to technical virtuosity on both sides. As the book closes, the hero is moved to pity the girl, and even the insidious thought of marriage enters his mind. Fortunately Montherlant has another volume in reserve, in which he will no doubt make his protagonist reject the temptation and continue in the paths of cynicism.

"Pity for Women" is free of dubious eroticism, in spite of some clinically detailed love scenes. The essence of the book lies in the hero's diatribes against love-as-women-understand-it. These may be taken as indicating the inward fear of the outwardly ruthless male faced by disarming femininity. In any case, there is some superb writing in these scenes, which are strong enough to make one forget the disjointed narrative and the author's often repellent tendency to pose. Unfortunately, much of the story is carried on in the form of long, self-analytical letters, interspersed with bouts of recrimination. As a result the book is not easy to read. It has insolence and power, and with all its faults and maddening qualities is far above the level of conventional French fiction. Beyond a doubt Montherlant, one of the last representatives of an aristocratic attitude in Gallic letters, is a figure of importance: an egregious stylist, a remarkable psychologist, —everything except a good novelist.

FROM THE JACKET OF "THESE BARS OF FLESH"

Summer Session

THESE BARS OF FLESH. By T. S. Stribling. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN ERSKINE

MR. STRIBLING offers us here an enjoyable fantasy which, if you like, you may call a satire. The story is set in the summer session of a large Northern university. Through some improbable but attractive characters, the book contrasts the South and the North—the South as the Yankee in ignorance imagines it, the North as the Southerner will report it, after a flying trip. As a Northerner, I think Mr. Stribling grievously underrates the motives of the Southerners at the summer school, but perhaps he takes no more liberties than are permissible in comic opera plots.

He tells the story of one Andrew S. Barnett, a gentleman from Georgia, mature at least in years, a former member of the state legislature, and now a country school superintendent. To hold his job, Barnett must have a college degree. He comes North to the summer session hoping to pick up a diploma. Speed is of the essence.

The summer session has a Dean, a comic-strip character, seventy-eight years old. The President of the university takes no summer vacation, but haunts the outskirts of the session to lend a helping hand when called upon. Mr. Barnett's case is considered with sympathy, and an ingenious plan is hit upon, whereby he is made a member of the faculty, and charged with a course on practical politics.

The course is a great success, but complications arise. Unluckily Barnett criticizes a speech by another member of the faculty. An enterprising student in the School of Journalism trails him for a full statement, and plays up the incident in the press as an economic schism in the university faculty. The President and the Dean feel obliged to dismiss Barnett and abolish his course; but the author ingeniously works out the plot to enable Barnett to return South, a happy man after all.

Not all the fun-poking in the book is at Barnett, though he bears the brunt. The other members of the faculty tend to be charlatans or idiots, and the students have only flashes of sanity. There is one professor of psychology who lets his students assemble the material for his books, and by this organized effort produces a book a week. There is also an assistant professor who, as long as he is on the campus, has a mind, but at home he permits his child to take the piano apart and use two of the keys as drum sticks for a primitive musical instrument the kindergarten is teaching the brat to make.

If we may assume that Mr. Stribling meant to give us merely an amusing extravaganza, it is easy to praise the book and acknowledge our debt for the entertainment. But if, as the publisher's blurb implies, a serious satire was intended, we must confess that without the blurb we never should have guessed it, and even with the hint we are not sure what is satirized. American education? It has many real faults and foibles, but none, as I know them, are touched on in this book. Here are windmills and men of straw. If students are at times less than perfect, at least those in our summer sessions are among the most admirable, the most sincere, the most heroic. Even the occasional young radicals, whom Mr. Stribling pillories, would have been understood and to a proper degree admired by such a Southerner as Thomas Jefferson.

I've enjoyed the book. Since I must do one or the other, I'd rather enjoy it than take it seriously.

John Erskine, formerly professor of English at Columbia University, is the author of several novels, including "The Private Life of Helen of Troy" and "The Brief Hour of François Villon."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Charles Macomb Flandrau

THERE was authorship in the family of Charles Macomb Flandrau, who died last week at his home in St. Paul. His father, Judge Charles Eugene Flandrau, was a historian of Minnesota. And in 1897, two years after he himself graduated from Harvard, the younger Flandrau published a collection of short stories entitled "Harvard Episodes."

The little book made a sensation. Not only did it portray American university life in which education was a mere pretext and society the main issue. Together with the college rounders, poseurs, and butterflies of the period, it depicted the sentimental idealization of socially privileged and prominent classmen. Indeed, this materialism quite saturated it; and today, the book's importance distinctly is historical. Later, Flandrau reworked his college material for serial purposes. The result was "The Diary of a Freshman."

But in 1907, Flandrau produced a volume of abiding interest. This was "Viva Mexico!" the fruit of years spent on his brother's coffee-plantation in the southern republic. A travel-book, the work represents a world now sunken: Mexico under the "military diazpotism" of Porfirio Diaz. But, a very perceptive, sophisticated performance, and one of the most sympathetic and penetrating of all pictures of Mexicans and their mores, the volume interprets their enduring characteristics. The observation of "the desire, after generations of oppression, of an ignorant and emotional people to assert their independence in small matters"—it is one of the many acute ones scattered through the book—is as illuminative of the causes of recent events below the border as of those which occurred there thirty years since. And as the perceptions and the sensuous color of the subject are expressed with wit and relish and in a lightly, brightly conversational, style, the book possesses an intrinsic charm and occupies an eminent place among the works of its class.

Later, Flandrau went to Normandy and purchased a villa near Bizy. Several other pleasant volumes flowed from his pen: two collections of personal essays, "Prejudices" and "Loquacities"; and another college book, "Sophomores Abroad." But "Viva Mexico!" remains his best. The tropics seem to have provided the main experience of this man of the world.

PAUL ROSENFELD.

Dinna Ken

THE editorial policy of *Ken*, it is announced in the first issue, is "to remind us of the liberties we now enjoy, that we may be on the alert to safeguard them against attack from within or without."

Everybody will agree that this is a splendid idea. It is a purpose shared by the editors of *The Saturday Evening Post, The Nation, The Ladies' Home Journal* and even, perhaps, by the publishers of the *National Geographic*. Vol. I, No. 1 of *Ken*, now on the stands, proposes to achieve the lofty aim by proving that Hitler and Mussolini are dangerous to the world and thoroughly objectionable fellows, personally. Somebody has hinted all that before, too.

Ken makes its bow with an ample bank-roll behind it, a bank-roll accumulated through the success of *Esquire*. The first issue is difficult to classify, which may well be in its favor. *Ken* isn't a news-mag and Harry Luce of Time, Inc., has nothing to worry about yet. It isn't a picture-mag, so *Life* is safe, too.

In addition to saving the world from dictatorships, *Ken* is going to give, so its publishers declare, a bi-weekly view of "The Insider's World." In short, the low-down. On this score, the first issue is less than impressive. There is a story about some mysterious invention, offered to War Secretary Baker in 1917, which would have ended the war immediately. No hint of the nature of the invention is given, however. A sensational piece about the Hauptmann case is offered. A reporter, it seems, actually wrote on the wall of the Hauptmann closet the telephone number of Dr. Condon which was an important link in the kidnapper's conviction. *Ken* does not, though, reveal the name of this dastardly journalist and the whole yarn sounds pretty fishy.

This is not to say that *Ken* is without interesting articles. We are informed that Hitler is seeking a wife who can rejuvenate him. William L. Laurence writes on the economic significance of Diesel engines. Raymond Gram Swing has an intelligent view of inflation. There is a good article on the possibility of using parachutes on transport planes.

The April 7 number of *Ken* is, as might be expected from the publishers of *Esquire*, big and lush and extravagantly illustrated. There are 138 pages, thirty or more contributors, and a wide variety of articles and pictures. Much remains to be done on typography and make-up.

HENRY F. PRINGLE.

"The River"

MR. PARE LORENTZ'S propaganda movie, "The River," is a beautiful and stirring job. The title is inaccurate, for we get very little of the river itself, but otherwise the direction has been almost uniformly shrewd. It falters only twice. The introduction of the ruined Confederate mansions inspires an irrelevant emotion, for the bearing of the Civil War on soil erosion is a little hard to make out. Presumably we are to think of the unintelligent agriculture that supported King Cotton. But neither Uncle Billy Sherman's bummers nor Marse Robert's order of April 10, 1865, has any relation to that, and better symbols could have been found in Hinton Helper. The libretto at this point only makes things worse: "We fought a war and kept the west bank of the river free of slavery forever." That is not only a non-sequitur in the context but bad history as well: the west bank wasn't free and we didn't fight the war to make it free. This passage has been muffed, and the last five minutes also go astray. They are direct propaganda for the T.V.A., whereas there has been no special pleading in the rest of the film but only a cannily arranged spectacle that convinces by its own weight. The shift from incontrovertible evidence to some highly debatable assertions arranged in a too visible pattern is a shock, and it makes one automatically rear back and ask questions. The effort of such a film should be to avoid that mood at all times, and most of all to avoid it at the end. Any picture of any baby is good propaganda against war, but it loses its value when it makes you look close to see if it has been retouched.

For the rest, "The River" is dramatic and deeply moving, and it drives its points home. All the superlatives you have been reading about it are justified. Mr. Virgil Thomson's score is very fine and effective, sensitively adapted to the shifting moods and emphases of the film, spirited, and nostalgic. The libretto, which has to carry the exposition, is usually inoffensive and sometimes spirited, though the repetitions become monotonous and there is too much radio-announcer's glucose in the bass. The photography is superb throughout. No one can see the film without realizing anew the tragedy of our wasted resources. In spite of the five minutes at the end, few can help being heartened by the evidence that something is being done to repair the waste.

The book that has been based on the film, however (Stackpole; $2), is disappointing. Still pictures are an anticlimax after the sweep and magnificence and terror that movement gives the original. And when one reads the semi-blank verse of the libretto, instead of hearing it in a darkened theater with one's eyes on the screen, it turns out to be pretty bombastic and pretty absurd.

B. DV.

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Letters to the Editor: *The Chinese Background; Adventures in Amazonia*

"War in China"

SIR:—In an article published in *The Saturday Review* of March 5, Mr. Carl Crow has done me the honor of devoting a large share of his attention to my book, "War in China." For the thoughtful consideration he has given it, I am, of course, extremely grateful. But in the course of his discussion of it he makes a statement which I believe to be contrary to fact. Mr. Crow says that it is a fallacy to ascribe to the British "the imposition on China of the provision of extraterritoriality, under which foreigners were subject only to their own laws and their own courts." Permit me to reply to Mr. Crow's points in support of this statement.

(1) "The provision of extraterritoriality in its first practical and workable form appeared in the treaty [of Virginia] negotiated by the American Commissioner, Caleb Cushing," in 1844.

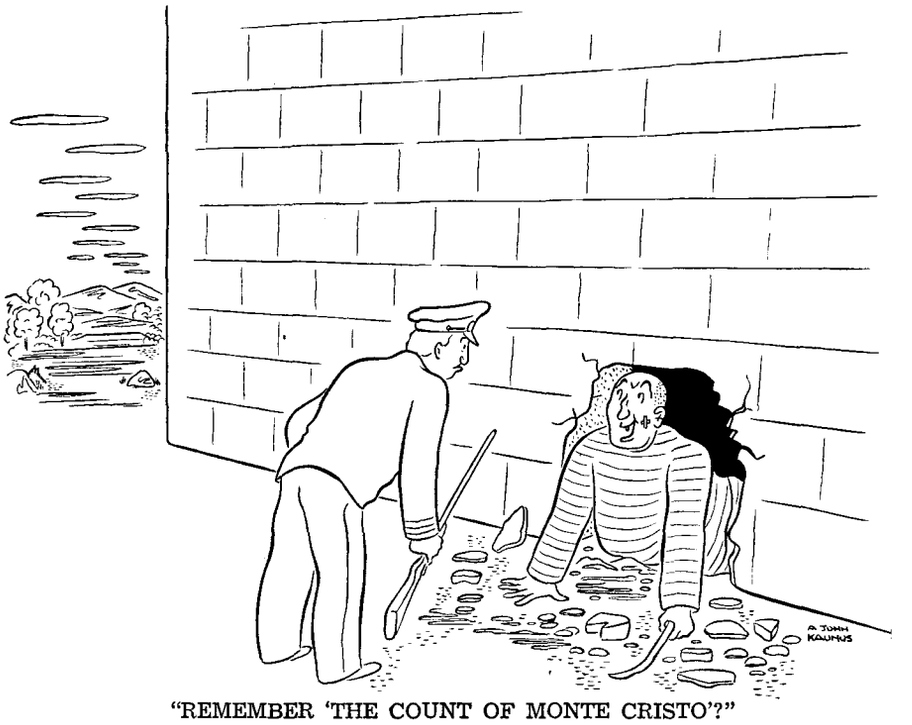
In 1787 the English Parliament passed an Act (26 Geo. III, c. 57) granting the Company's supercargoes at Canton the authority for "taking, arresting, seizing, remitting, sending or bringing to England" any person found there contrary to law. This is the first of several Acts of Parliament in which the application of extraterritoriality to China is clearly reflected. Further, since 1784 no British authority has ever surrendered to the Chinese authorities a British subject accused of committing a crime on Chinese territory. One may fairly say, then, that from 1784 on extraterritoriality was an unvarying British practice.

In the treaty of Nanking, of 1842, the first British treaty with China, there is, to be sure, no mention of extraterritoriality. But in some General Regulations issued by China the following year, after consultation with a representative of the Crown, clear and explicit provisions for the exercise of extraterritorial rights are incorporated. Within three months of their publication, all of these regulations had been ratified by both governments in the supplementary treaty of the Bogue (October 8, 1843).

Meanwhile, American policy and practice toward American citizens accused of infringements of Chinese law had been the very opposite of British policy and practice. For America acknowledged China's authority over foreigners in Chinese territory, and I cannot find in the records a single case in which the United States Government asserted extraterritorial rights prior to the treaty of Wanghia (1844). Not until 1848 did we begin to exercise those rights.

(2) "It was also an American [Townsend Harris] who wrote the extraterritorial provisions into the treaty [of 1858] with Japan later to be copied by all the other powers."

But the British, the Dutch, and the Russians had all obtained recognition of extraterritorial rights from Japan before Townsend Harris landed at Shimoda, and *these rights had already accrued to the United States* through the operation of the most-favored-nation clause in the earlier Perry Treaty of 1854.



"REMEMBER 'THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO'?"

(3) In support of his contention that the United States had a hand in shaping the policy of other powers toward China before 1898, Mr. Crow adduces the extraterritorial clauses in the Treaty of Wanghia and asserts that Cushing "formulated the 'Open Door' policy which Hay later enunciated, not as an original idea, but a restatement of an old policy."

With the Treaty of Wanghia I have already dealt. And the case of the "Open Door" is much the same. On September 20, 1843, the four ports opened to the British the previous year were made available to ships of all nations alike and on equal terms. In the Treaty of the Bogue, concluded with the British a few weeks later, the Chinese authorities stipulated that "the merchants of the various nations of Europe should be allowed to proceed to the four ports . . . for the purposes of trade, *to which the English were not to make any objections. . . .*"

From this it seems evident that it was neither the United States nor the British who initiated this step, but China herself. And the step was the germ of the whole "Open Door" policy.

VARIAN FRY.

New York City.

"The Other Side of the Mountain"

SIR:—The review of James R. Ullman's "The Other Side of the Mountain" by L. J. H. Jr. scarcely seems to do justice to a book which is one of the pleasantest pieces of travel reading in a long time, and is so for precisely the reasons which your reviewer sets down as faults.

"Such adventures as he had might have occurred in New England," according to this gentleman. The adventure which Mr. Ullman went for was the experience of a new continent and a freshening of his sympathies—"for to admire and for to see" as Kipling said. This adventure he did have and did recreate in his book. Perhaps he might have had it in New England too. What of that? Does L. J. H. Jr. demand that in Amazonia a man's adventures must be of Amazons?

As for the informal style to which your reviewer objects on the ground that it seemed affected, it did not seem so to me. A friend of mine who read the book at my suggestion said "It's just as if I'd made the trip myself." The defense rests on that statement.

WILLIAM SLOANE.

New York City.

Stamp Travelogue

SIR:—It was with pleasure that I read Quercus's recent note concerning the Virgin Islands stamp in a recent column. But why limit yourself to mental voyaging in the recent issues of the U. S. alone? Why not a travel bureau in an album? In other words, a stamp collection of "places to visit" is possible, inexpensive, gratifying. Why not?

MANUEL HAHN.

Winnetka, Ill.

Sweet English

SIR:—In decent respect to our sweet English tongue, I must beseech you to explain to the office goat that when I used that shocking word in the final paragraph of my last editorial I was quoting Mr. Archibald MacLeish's well-known poem, "Invocation to the Social Muse." What Mr. MacLeish wrote, and what I borrowed from him, is "We are whores, Fräulein." It comes out "prostitutes," and I can't have that on my conscience.

BERNARD DEVOTO.

White Plains, N. Y.

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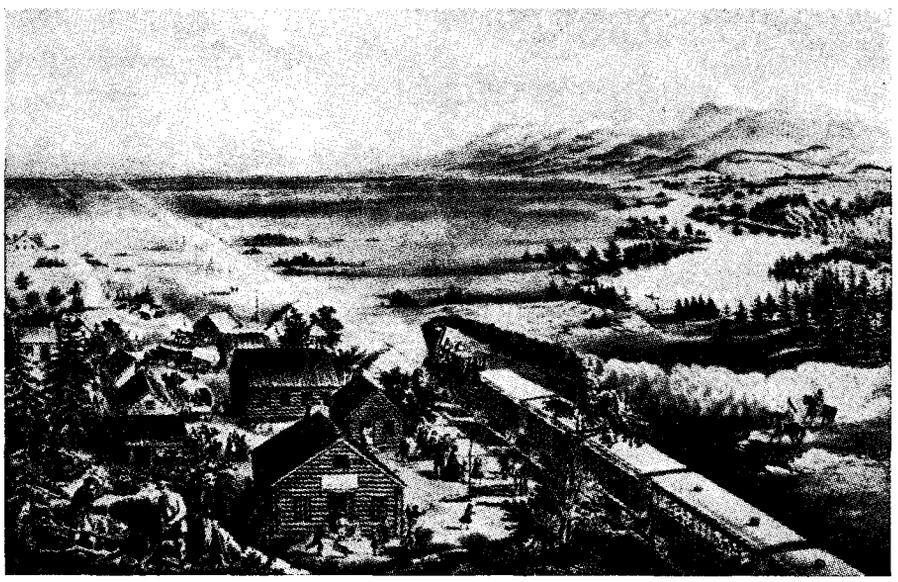
Pay Day in Politics

BY WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

IN America, the days from the sixties to the middle nineties were days of the conquest of the trans-Mississippi country by the white man. He had ruled it politically for nearly a century. But his social and economic life moved in after the Civil War. States were carved out of the great territory from Mexico to Canada and west of the Mississippi rails spread interminably over the prairies and plains and the mountains. Wires and pipes strung everywhere. The cities that sprang out of the ashes of Frémont's campfires grew from village to town and became great sprawling, wooden, industrial hives, where smelters stained the skies, where cattle came for slaughter, where millions of men, chasing the Westward moving star of empire, left the rail head and plunged into the wilderness. Excepting for the small handful that came to Kansas in the late fifties to make the state "the homestead of the free" in the Abolitionist movement, they came for purely economic reasons. They wanted to better their condition.

It was a definitely acquisitive civilization, and because the prizes offered were great —mines, forests, illimitable pastures, rich corn and wheat lands—the people who built the new West built it upon a dog-eat-dog morality. It was a possessive civilization, if ever one was erected on this earth. It was creative only as the creative instinct was rewarded by great riches. Public sentiment backed the man who grabbed franchises, the syndicate that grabbed mines and forests, the industrial leaders who organized commodity interests with gross and unqualified selfishness. Public sentiment that demanded profits for its industrial leaders, produced politicians who represented public sentiment, and erected a government made to the hands of the spoilers.

It was the Hamiltonian dream gone to seed. The place where business and politics hooked up was the state legislature. The various state legislatures elected United States senators, and the organized units of aggrandized capital in any state had first to control the state legislature. Incidentally, to control the legislators, the plutocracy had to own the court house and finance the party committee. The railroads were the sharp edge of the wedge which separated the popular interest from private interest in political matters. The railroads had something of inestimable value to a politician, which cost the railroads little. It was the railroad pass. In the seventies and eighties, members of the legislature had annual passes on all the railroads in the state for the asking, for themselves, and they could have trip passes for their wives and families by applying to any railroad attorney



ACROSS THE CONTINENT (1868)
From "Best Fifty Currier & Ives Lithographs."

in the state capital. The railroad attorneys in the state capitals were the real governing classes. They, having passes at their disposal, had power. Around the railroad attorneys clustered the local plunderbund: if it was a grazing state, the packing houses; if a wheat state, the millers; if a copper, steel, or iron state, the smelters, miners, and steel mills. In the Southern states the cotton interests made common cause with the railroads.

The railroads, in the days when the trans-Mississippi country was being organized, were the only national institutions that touched every state. The packers, the smelters, the cotton factors, the steel masters, the textile mill men, the lumbermen, all were local—at most, regional. So that the national politics of America in the last three decades of the old century centered in the offices of the railroad barons of Wall Street. Into Pierpont Morgan's office went the candidate for United States senator from Kansas or from Georgia or from Oregon, hat in hand, seeking Morgan's support. For Morgan was railroads. Morgan or Jim Hill or Harriman or the Gould interests had the power of life and death over candidates for the United States Senate. Not always were the railroad interests in any state consolidated. Often Gould had his senatorial candidate, Harriman his, or Morgan his. But they got together quickly enough when a man really brave and wise and honest came into the senatorial picture as a candidate. Also such a man, at least in the seventies and eighties, rarely appeared. Even the noblest of our statesmen in that era knew very well that the railroads controlled the politics of our various states. If they did not bow formally to the railroad bosses, they were careful not to cut them dead in public. So that the whole drift and tendency of American politics in the days when we were laying the rails, building the cities, and carving out the states of our trans-Mississippi empire was toward a plutocracy, and our statesmen were servants of the plutocrats.

These statesmen, some of whom fought bravely for civil service, for tariff for revenue only, for incorruptible government, for education, for clean politics, were often lukewarm upon the iniquities of the railroad domination of politics. They generally had a blind side when the interests of their own state industry came in conflict with the common good. These are the men whom Matthew Josephson, has made the subject of his book, "The Politicos."*

It is a scholarly work. It stands up, a true picture of the times. It is written with the clarity that arises from a sense of truth. Together with Mr. Josephson's earlier book, "The Robber Barons," it represents the economic and social life of America from the days of Grant until the days of McKinley. The politicians were the political shadows of the robber barons. The development of high finance—oil, railroads, steel, all the great commodity industries—produced a type of industrial organization which in turn fabricated its own political leaders. James G. Blaine and Leland Stanford represented railroads. Senator William A. Clark represented copper. Matthew S. Quay represented steel and coal. The New England senators represented the high tariff and

* *THE POLITICOS:* 1865-1896. *By Matthew Josephson. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.* 1938. $4.50.

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textiles. The Southern senators in general represented cotton, with the statesmen of the far South interested in sugar. Senator Teller and the Rocky Mountain statesmen represented silver. The political needs of every industry were nurtured by some group in Washington, and the relation between New York, the commercial capital of America, and Washington, the political capital, were close and, in the nature of things, "one and inseparable." No other American writer has made such an understanding picture of those times.

But those times began to change in the late eighties. By the early nineties, the cities and states had all been established. Enough railroads had been built to satisfy the needs of that century and more than satisfy the needs of the next. The major commodity industries had staked out their claims to the oil and gas and wheat and cotton and coal and iron and copper. Commercial and industrial pioneering was over. Most of these enterprises, the states and the cities as well as the railroads and the great commodity industries, were erected upon borrowed money. The ten-year bonds began to come due. The mortgages on the farmers' land were expiring. Pay day arose in the early nineties, a great economic menace to the prosperity of the American people.

That was in the West. In the South after the Civil War, heavy investments of capital had been made in rebuilding the wreckage of the conflict of the sixties. Economically, if not socially, the credit position of the South was not unlike that of the West where the young Union soldiers had been building the new, shiny civilization of the prairies, the high plains, and the mountains. The West and the South were in debt to New England and New York. So the debtors went into politics to wrest control from the creditors. Public sentiment in the trans-Mississippi country and in the South no longer backed up an acquisitive civilization. Indeed, the whole American people, being in debt and pressed for cash, began to take thought about the distribution of the wealth which had been produced by an acquisitive economy. Suddenly we had the rise of the Populists. Men began to question the gilded heroes of the golden age. Candidates rose up in the various states for the House of Representatives in Washington and for the Senate, who challenged the divine right of wealth to rule. Between 1890 and 1900 a dozen senators and a score of representatives in Washington came clamoring for social and industrial justice. They wore no railroad magnate's collar. They were free men.

A curious and interesting account of this change in public sentiment is given in C. Vann Woodward's recent biography of "Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel."* The agrarian rebellion, of which Tom Watson was one of the leaders and William Jennings Bryan the authentic voice, had its beginning in the South. It was started as a faction of the Southern Democratic party, and in the early nineties began to split into a party. This Southern agrarian party was led by Tom Watson, and Georgia was the center of the Southern political vortex, as Kansas was the center of the Western disturbance. Mr. Woodward's biography of Watson constitutes the best one-volume history that has appeared of that first crop of social ideals, politically garnered in Populism.

It is hard to realize nearly fifty years after that revolt what a menace it was to the peace and stability of the privileged classes of America in that far day. All the venom which has been poured upon the New Deal, all the class hatred which today is manifest in the criticism of President Roosevelt from many quarters, was poured upon the Populists. Because

Pach Bros. 1904

WATSON AT 48: HISTORIAN AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
From "Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel."

Bryan, in 1896, had a Populist presidential nomination along with the Democratic nomination, the vials of this ancient wrath dowsed the young silver-tongued orator of the Platte. But he was almost respectable compared with Tom Watson.

Mr. Woodward's biography is also valuable in that it is something more than the story of Populism. It is a striking portrait of a man and carries his career on through the days when the Populist party crumbled, when the South lost its agrarian zeal in the tide of prosperity washing in with the new century. In that new day Tom Watson set out to become a literary figure, later a political boss, and went about the country abusing the Catholics — indignation gone to seed, wrath frittered away in folly. The book is a stirring, noble story of a really important social and political movement in American life. It is a part of the present-day agitation and unrest and aspiration toward social reconstruction.

These two books, "The Politicos" and "Tom Watson," illustrate perfectly the change which comes over politics when the economics of a country change. In Mr. Josephson's book most of the politicos whom he writes about rose in the days of the big real estate boom of the last quarter century. Business men were boomers, politicians were boomers, but as the century grew old, as pay day drew nigh on the mortgages which were back of the big boom, the economic situation caused by the revolt of the debtors produced an entirely new crop, a different crop of politicians. No two books of this decade illustrate more exactly how politicians change with business and how business changes politicians than the two books which are the subject of this essay. These books are worth any man's time who desires to know intelligently the social, political, and economic forces that made America what it was at the turn of the century.

William Allen White is the editor of The Emporia Gazette.

* *TOM WATSON, AGRARIAN REBEL. By C. Vann Woodward. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1938. $3.75.

Gulls on the Ice

By DAVID McCORD

THE river wind that stormy day
Found something new for its winter play
Before it blew out in the bay.

The warm rain slanting on the ice
Smelled of a wintry-summer spice
And set one river flowing twice:

Once in the channel as before
The surface froze like a ballroom floor,
And now on the ice where it mattered more.

The gulls stood six in a flawless row,
Preferring the rip to a shore of snow,
Glad of the cloud that could rain down so.

They stood by the edge of an open break,
Not for the wind but the water's sake;
And a Mallard swam with a green-ringed drake.

The wind lay hard on the water-sheet:
It swirled web-deep at the standing feet
Where a man would slip with an iron cleat.

If a gull swung round, he would take a brace
With his wings out full to keep his place—
Like a child who walks with a want of grace.

He could stand tip-toe as about to start,
But he had no gift in the walker's art,
And his soles refused to exact their part.

If he took one step he began to slide
Or he sat right down in his wounded pride,
With his wings still poised and dignified.

It was clear at least that a graceful bird,
With more in his flight than the poet's word,
Has a way of his own to appear absurd:

His following ships and the shoreless sound
In freedom hardly the sky can bound
Is a lonely humor when gone aground.

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A Highlight of the War

THE LOST BATTALION. By Thomas M. Johnson and Fletcher Pratt. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by R. Ernest Dupuy, Major, F.A., U.S.A.

FOR nearly twenty years the episode of the Lost Battalion has been an intriguing highlight of American participation in the World War. The little written about it up to the present time has been fragmentary. The very name has been misleading. Smiling Thomas M. Johnson, newspaperman and A.E.F. war correspondent for the New York *Sun*, and studious Fletcher Pratt, military historian, set out to obtain the real story. And a workmanlike job they have done. Through this book the Lost Battalion moves into "fame's eternal camping ground" to fall in forever with the men of the Alamo, of the French Foreign Legion's Camerone; Whittlesey to rank with Crockett, Travis, Bowie, Danjou of the wooden hand.

The story is that of six companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 308th Infantry, with battalion headquarters and machine-gun detachments; and one company of the 307th—all units of the 77th Division, in strength some 600 officers and men. Launched into the heart of the Argonne Forest as part of their divisional attack in the American offensive Sept. 25, 1918, they were, by the fortune of war, sucked into one command under Whittlesey, senior major present, in a dank ravine where skillful German counter-moves completely cut them off. Without food, reserve ammunition, water—hostile machine-gun fire sprayed the waterhole incessantly—this composite group successfully resisted both the ever-increasing attacks of an exasperated enemy and the heart-breaking blow of a concentration from their own artillery, for five days. For amusement the survivors, between attacks, could crouch and watch American observation planes drop food and smokes intended for their consumption into the cheering maws of their enemies.

Photo U. S. Army official

THE WATER HOLE
From "The Lost Battalion."

Through this entire period burns the living flame of "Galloping Charlie" Whittlesey, bespectacled New England lawyer, holding by sheer personal leadership drafted men from all over the United States—raw recruits some, who didn't know how to load their rifles when they first went into action. Men, for instance, like Abe Krotoshinsky, the Polish Jew boy from the Bronx; little "Zep" Cepeglia, transplanted from Italy to the East Side; and Kaemper, Montanan replacement.

Summoned to surrender, Whittlesey did not reply "Go to Hell!" as the popular version runs. He did take in the panels displayed thus far to inform our planes, lest the enemy see any speck of white and conclude the outfit was capitulating. And—spark of genius—he let the story run through the command with epic result:—

"Every other emotion . . . was transformed into a wild rage, a furious desire for vengeance. . . . Tired men, sick men, sat up and began to sharpen bayonets on pieces of limestone, grinding their teeth. Wounded, who had not fired a gun for two days, pulled themselves out of their holes and began to hunt for cartridges."

The authors have made an evidently successful effort to study every bit of source-material available, both from American and German reports and eye-witness accounts. The story is presented in fast-moving narrative form, a series of close-knit flashes from the dreary Binarville ravine itself, from division and brigade headquarters, from German command-posts.

Messrs. Johnson and Pratt have made a definite contribution to World War history. In their analysis this reviewer concurs in the main. But their final conclusion: ". . . the lesson is that democracies should not engage in mass wars, for when they seek a universal military competence they tend to lose democracy," is weak; it muddies an otherwise logical sequence. Minor exasperations: lack of a large-scale general map on which the operation as a whole could be studied; foreign nomenclature such as "Regiment 308, Division 77"; lack of a brief statistical tabulation for reference purposes. But never mind these; "The Lost Battalion" is not only a whirlwind tale of derring-do, but a critique which should be studied by every soldier and—above all—by every individual interested in the national defense: lest we forget. John W. Thomason's spirited jacket sketch is a tribute to the American soldier.

Novelist's Novel

THE WIND CHANGES. By Olivia Manning. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by Howard Mumford Jones

THIS remarkable book is a novelist's novel as Spenser is a poet's poet. Item by item, the craftsmanship is superb; but it is by no means certain that the items add up into a book of such significance as to appeal to any but a limited public.

Miss Manning has theoretically set her story in Ireland during the Black-and-Tan days, but except as external motivation the events of that troubled time are unimportant in the structure of the tale. Any period of stress and apparent decay would do as well save as the peculiar atmosphere of Ireland influences the moods of the characters. These are three—an Englishman named Arion, an Irishman named Sean, and a heroine from the north of Ireland with English blood in her veins, Elizabeth. They form a self-conscious and self-tortured triangle, the love-relation in which gives the story its substance. Much is made of irrational motivation—indeed, the characters scarcely do anything from rational motives—but Miss Manning's subtleties far exceed the crude posturings before a mental mirror which most novelists mistake for the exploration of the unconscious.

Despite these passages, despite passages of exquisite descriptive writing and style wonderfully flexible, the novel does not rise into importance. A triangle composed of a man ironically withdrawn from active participation in life, a weak man passionately determined to transcend himself by participation in life, and a woman who, not knowing her own desires, is swayed backward and forward between the two, does not profoundly impress the reader, largely because, I suppose, the trio lacks moral significance. These velleities, these shifts of mood and decision, however intricately described, never amount to an important decision; and unfortunately conduct is still four-fifths of a novel. Miss Manning fails to make us believe that it is of any great consequence whether any of her three characters decide on a course of action; and, however important their private lives may be to themselves and sometimes to each other, they do not in the end become important to the reader.

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*BOOK PREVIEW**

The Boy Leaves Home

BY

CLYDE BRION DAVIS

CLEVELAND AS HOMER ZIGLER SAW IT

JULY 18, 1906. I believe I have at last collected my wits sufficiently to record what has happened.

I am in Cleveland. I have left Buffalo forever. For a month I have been a poor, distraught, bewildered wretch. I have been utterly miserable. I suppose I should have committed suicide had I possessed sufficient courage.

Now I have a job on the *Cleveland Empire* and am beginning to come to my senses. But I do not believe I shall remain in Cleveland long. I wish to be farther away from Buffalo. Here there is too much danger of running across people I know.

On June 21 I wrote of a quarrel with my beloved Frances and of our reconciliation. The quarrel was caused by my jealousy of Paul Clark. I realized that. I resolved at least to keep my feelings hidden, even if I were unable to conquer them.

But on the following night, Friday, June 22, I finished work earlier than usual. It was only about a quarter to one when I turned my last copy over to the city desk and Mr. Penny said, "Zig, if you're up you may as well go."

So I rode my wheel slowly out Genesee and over to Cherry and as I approached Lemon Street a sudden whim struck me. I would ride past Fran's house before going home. I made the turn and pedaled east on Lemon.

In front of Fran's house there is a little iron darkey painted red, white and black who holds a ring out in one hand for you to tie your horses to. But what I saw in front of this little iron darkey made me suddenly dizzy and sick. It was Paul Clark's Rambler shining there in the gas street light.

Turning sharply in the street, I rode back almost to Cherry Street. There I rested my wheel against a telephone pole and walked back toward the car, stepping softly in the grass bordering the sidewalk.

I don't know why I did this, what I expected to do. But I was beside myself. Dimly, I could see two figures in the car. I could not be certain of their identity, but they seemed to be sitting very close together.

As I crept forward my pulse was swishing in my temples. I seemed unable to take a full breath—it was as if a broad surcingle were strapped tightly about my chest. The air was heavy with the scent of lilacs from a near-by bush. I was steeped in misery and lilacs.

Then a girl's laugh floated out into the night. It was lilting, liquid, unaffected laughter—as individual and intimate of Frances as her blue eyes or her slim hands.

I found myself running along the grass toward my bicycle, running and sobbing hysterically. I was drunk with grief and humiliation. I nearly fell in trying to mount my wheel.

The night after Frances had broken a standing engagement with me she was spooning with this speenort, this unspeakable Paul Clark, after one o'clock in the morning.

I pedaled madly down Cherry Street, past Orange. It seemed that I had a definite destination and that speed was most important, but the purpose of it all was vague and uncertain. Then, as I approached Peach Street, I realized why I was scorching. I was going home. I was going to get my father's revolver. I was going back and kill Paul Clark.

Even in this first insane muster of facts and purposes I had no notion of killing Frances. True, I felt she had betrayed me, but I laid the blame entirely on the oily wiles of Clark. He was the agency which was ruining my life. I would destroy him and everything would be all right again.

I leaned my bicycle against the front porch and, with trembling fingers, opened the front door with my latchkey. The hall light was burning dimly and the ghostly white finger of the gas mantle standing sentry duty against my home-coming seemed to be dozing in the murk. In the air there was a stale smell of corn beef and cabbage left over from supper. The gilt cupid clock in the parlor gabbled about the fleetness of time. But now I must not hurry. I must be quiet and careful.

I closed the heavy front door softly and turned to be suddenly impressed by the strange unfamiliarity of familiar things. The hydra-headed hatrack in the corner all at once was alien and unfriendly and even threatening.

Sitting on the bottom step of the red-carpeted stairs, I removed my bicycle pants guards, unbuttoned and took off my shoes. Then I began my careful ascent, stepping cautiously on the extreme right edges of the third and fifth steps because experience had taught me these were "creakers."

I knew my father kept his old revolver wrapped in a flannel cloth in the second drawer of their bureau. I knew also that I must exercise great caution because the drawers did not pull easily and the bureau was wobbly on its legs.

At the head of the stairs I paused and listened. I could hear my father's heavy breathing and moved on toward their room.

"Homer!" It was only a whisper, but it sounded like a cry of alarm in the night.

For a moment I couldn't reply—my mouth and throat were that dry. Then I managed to say, "Yes, Mama."

"Is everything all right?"

"I—I guess so. Why?"

"I just had a troubled dream about you. It woke me up."

"Yes, I'm all right."

"You're sure you're all right?"

"Yes, I'm all right."

"Don't you want me to fix you something to eat?"

"No, Mama. Not hungry."

"Wouldn't take me but a minute to

* *This week* The Saturday Review *presents an episode from Clyde Brion Davis's "The Great American Novel." This is the story, in diary form, of Homer Zigler, a newspaper man ambitious to become the great American novelist. It will be published in May by Farrar & Rinehart.*

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scramble you some eggs and make a cup of coffee."

"No, I couldn't eat a thing. . . . Thanks."

"Well, good night, then."

"Good night, Mama."

I went into my room and sat on the edge of the bed waiting for her to go to sleep so I could get the revolver. I felt sicker than I had ever felt before in my whole life—sicker even than when I had typhoid. I was so dizzy and my heart pounded so violently that I wondered if perhaps I were dying.

I knew I must wait a long time before trying to get the revolver; I must be sure my mother was asleep. And by that time Paul Clark would be gone. I thought of getting a knife and attacking him with that. But he was so big and strong, I might not be able to kill him with a knife.

Everything was hopeless, hopeless. Perhaps the only solution was to kill myself. But even that did not seem to be a solution. It had been beaten into my brain that there was a special place in Hades reserved for suicides. Then I still should be conscious of Clark and Fran. Then I should suffer my misery through eternity, the misery of seeing them together.

I slipped down the stairs again, and put on and buttoned my shoes, clipped on the pants guards. I turned off the gas light and went outdoors where the night air was cool on my face.

Irresistibly, I was drawn back to Lemon Street. The Rambler was gone. Fran's house was dark. The little iron darkey's face shone in the gas light. He was grinning in a wicked, knowing way.

I turned back and rode and rode, out Genesee, over to Broadway, over to William and out near the stockyards I stopped at a saloon. It was a filthy booze shop with sawdust on the floor. The bartender was fat and sleepy. At the far end of the bar two stockyards workers were arguing thickly and paid me no attention.

Two big drinks of raw whisky warmed my stomach and steadied my nerves. But they did not soothe the aching void in my soul. I went out and rode for more miles. It was daylight and the birds were chorusing when I got back home and threw myself, exhausted and fully clothed, on my bed. I didn't really sleep. I only drifted in and out of a horrid, comatose condition for an hour.

When I heard the family getting up I rose and closed my door. I didn't want to see my father. The wild hysteria was gone from me and in its place was the lassitude of deepest melancholia. It was as if the entire world had been snatched out from under me and I was left alone in nothingness.

There was no thought in my mind that possibly I had not lost Frances, that possibly there was a good explanation for what I had seen. There was no thought that perhaps I was attaching too great significance to the incident. There was only a realization, deep as the pit, that Frances was gone from me forever.

Downstairs I heard the clatter of breakfast-getting and smelled bacon and coffee. I heard them at breakfast. Then, at intervals over a half hour, I heard the goodbyes of my father and sisters and the slamming of the front door as they departed.

When they had gone I went down to get a cup of coffee.

My mother was surprised to see me down so early. She was sitting at the kitchen table dreaming over her second cup.

"Why, Homer," she said, "up so early!"

"Couldn't sleep," I said.

"Aren't you feeling well?"

"Not especially, Mama. Couldn't sleep. Just want a cup of java."

"No, no," she said, "I'll cook you some breakfast in a jiffy. What would you like?"

"Nothing, Mama. Just a cup of hot java."

"Well, let me warm it up." She took the cup from my hand. "You're not looking well, Homer," she said.

"I'll be all right. Just couldn't sleep."

"Think you'd feel better if you'd eat some breakfast. Let me make you some nice pancakes and bacon."

"Not now, Mama. Maybe I'll be hungry later."

She poured me a thick ironstone cup of black coffee and set out a plate of fried cakes. I drank the coffee and got my cap and pants guards.

"Going someplace, Homer?" my mother asked. "I think you ought to try and get some more sleep."

"I'll be back soon," I said. "Just going out for a little while."

I rode down to Russell's bicycle shop and sold him my bicycle for $12. It was a good Crescent wheel with a carbide lamp and a tire bell and a Morrow coaster brake and carrier, worth anyhow $30, but Russell only offered ten and I was lucky to get twelve out of him.

Then I went to the savings bank and drew out all the money I had been saving toward the time Frances and I should want to buy furniture, the money I had saved as a streetcar conductor and more than a year reporting. It amounted to $171.62.

Home again, I went to my room and packed the old telescope valise with my extra clothing, including my working suit and this old ledger I am keeping my record in. I shaved and put on my new suit with the broad, padded shoulders.

My mother saw me carrying the valise downstairs. She was in the parlor with a bandanna handkerchief tied around her gray hair, squeaking the carpet sweeper back and forth.

"Homer," she said. She dropped the handle of the carpet sweeper and walked into the hall.

"I'm going away, Mama." I told her.

"Going away—where? Why?"

"Cleveland," I said. I actually hadn't thought definitely where I was going, except that I felt an urge to move westward. I said Cleveland because it's only a couple of hundred miles from Buffalo and I thought it would be easier.

"Are you going there for the paper? Or—"

"No, Mama. I'm leaving the *Morning Journal*. I'm leaving Buffalo."

"Homer, is something wrong? Tell Mama what's happened."

I set the valise down. "Mama," I said, "this is strictly between you and me. Promise me you won't tell Papa or anybody."

"Yes."

"You promise?"

"Of course. Tell me."

"Well, Frances and I have broken—definitely and finally."

She put her arms about me. "Now, Homer," she soothed, "that's no reason to be running away from home. This is your home. You're my baby. Now you don't have to be running away from me, do you? You just wait a few days and you'll feel different. Things have a way of mending themselves."

"This will never mend itself." My voice was shrill and unnatural.

"Well, even if it don't," she said and laughed shortly, "they say there's just as good fish in the sea as ever was caught."

Her treating me like a little boy irritated me. "Mama," I said, desperately, "there's just no use talking. I can't stand it here in Buffalo now. I simply can't. I've got to get away and I'm going."

She began to cry softly.

"Remember, Mama, you promised not to say anything about this—about Frances, I mean."

She shook her head. "I won't," she said. "But—but what can I say?"

"Tell 'em I got a job in Cleveland."

"But you haven't."

"I will have. I know a man on *The Empire*. I'll get a job without any trouble."

"But maybe you'll get sick away from home. You don't look well. Oh, Homer, I can't stand you going away like this."

"I'll be all right. Mama. I'm big enough to take care of myself, you know." I tried to smile.

Tears were rolling down her plump cheeks, but she smiled at me and patted me on the back.

"Now," she said, "you let Mama fix you a nice breakfast and we'll talk this all over very cool and then if you insist I'll let you go. But you've got to promise to come back soon."

"Really, Mama," I said. "I couldn't eat a thing. And I've got to hurry and catch a train."

I kissed her and left her crying and urging me to write the minute I got to Cleveland and to come home the first week end I could get away and to let them know if I got into any trouble because "Papa can handle things, you know."

I felt relieved when I finally was on the train and rattling through the dirty Buffalo yards westward bound. A sense of freedom lessened the immense ache.

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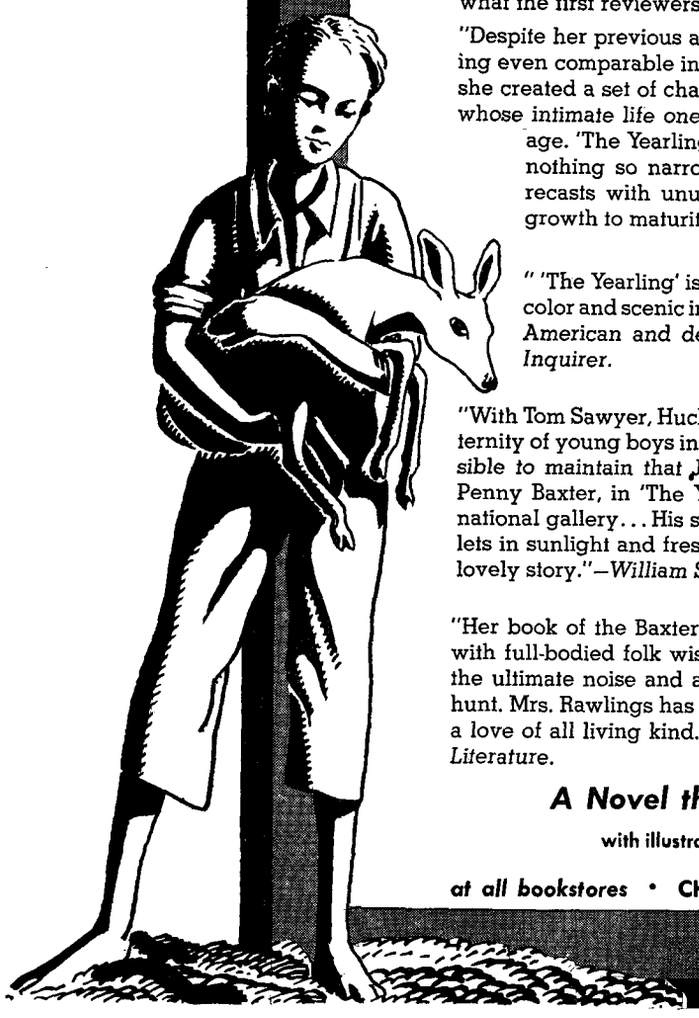
An American novel unequalled for its rich and eventful story, lovable characters and breathlessly beautiful natural background

The Yearling

by

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

author of "South Moon Under"



When "South Moon Under" was published—like "The Yearling" a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection—leading critics hailed the appearance of a "work of genius": "a living document and distinguished art." Now read what the first reviewers say of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings new novel:

"Despite her previous accomplishment, Mrs. Rawlings has written nothing even comparable in excellence to 'The Yearling'... Never before has she created a set of characters who are so close and real to the reader, whose intimate life one can share without taint of unconscious patronage. 'The Yearling'—and this is the best tribute one can pay it—is nothing so narrowly limited as a 'local color' novel. Rather, it recasts with unusual beauty the old, timeless story of youth's growth to maturity."—*Edith H. Walton in the New York Times.*

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" 'The Yearling' is even better than 'South Moon Under.' The local color and scenic investiture are fine. Beyond these things, it is truly American and deeply human."—*Sidney Williams, Philadelphia Inquirer.*

●

"With Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn and the lesser members of the fraternity of young boys in American literature well in mind it is quite possible to maintain that Jody Baxter, son of the farmer and huntsman, Penny Baxter, in 'The Yearling' is the most charming boy in the entire national gallery... His story... opens windows wide for the reader and lets in sunlight and fresh breezes... We will be grateful, all of us, for this lovely story."—*William Soskin in N. Y. Herald Tribune "Books,"*

●

"Her book of the Baxter family is crowded with comedy of characters, with full-bodied folk wisdom and with the silence and the excitement, the ultimate noise and accumulated natural history of the back woods hunt. Mrs. Rawlings has written a wise and moving book informed with a love of all living kind."—*Jonathan Daniels in the Saturday Review of Literature.*

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Reading Between the Lines

LOOKING BEHIND THE CENSORSHIPS. By Eugene J. Young. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by LOUIS F. KEEMLE

IN no other country in the world do the daily press and the periodicals furnish the reading public with as broad and truthful a picture of events as in the United States. The information is gathered under tremendous difficulties, especially today when dictatorships make it exceedingly difficult for a foreign correspondent to get at the current truth. Even the democracies, in the face of their example, are sometimes trying to withhold unfavorable news and to flood the reporters with what may frankly be called propaganda. As yet they have not been able to regiment the press as the dictators have, but they have tried in more subtle ways to hamper factual reporting and the prompt presentation of the truth. In view of these conditions, this book by the cable editor of the *New York Times* ought to prove enlightening to the serious student of world affairs, and of absorbing interest to the non-journalistic reader.

Some of its most interesting passages elucidate what is behind the devious course of British foreign policy. Others deal with the foreign policies of France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. Mr. Young describes the desperate squirmings of France, seeking European alliances but always returning to the inescapable fact that the "nation of shopkeepers" is her surest safeguard. He pricks pins into the bubbles of the dictators, expressing the view that their "thrones" are shaky and that they are "front guys" for other and more imponderable forces to whose demands and ambitions they must accede. The title of his book slightly belies its content, for "Looking Behind the Censorships" (sub-titled "Revelations by a Foreign Editor") dwells only incidentally on censorship, although it does explain in considerable detail why it is difficult for a foreign correspondent to get the facts as they happen.

Censorship, as all informed persons know, is almost futile. Sooner or later, the facts must and will come out. But, as Mr. Young points out with much effect, the censorship of the dictators frequently serves to retard publication of the news until the public at home and abroad is preoccupied with other matters and its impact is lost. Its chief aim is to give out an official version, always most favorable to the country concerned, and to prevent the publication of corollary facts which might clarify the picture. Official versions usually are factual enough as far as they go, but they contain half truths and weasel words which obfuscate the real situation.

A diligent correspondent may know or suspect the truth, but he may have to be in a position to prove it. And if he cables it abroad, true though it may be, and he is called on the carpet of the foreign office or secret police, he cannot reveal the source of his information. As to the censorship, it is often stupidly managed by subordinates who are so afraid of their skins that they may delete innocuous matters of information. Nevertheless, if the story has sufficient news interest, the correspondent often finds ways of getting it out. The telephone helps—until the call is suddenly cut off by a listening censor. A departing friendly traveler may carry a letter, or one may get through the regular air mail.

These devices do not, however, always work. What, for instance, can a correspondent do if, permitted to telephone only from governmental press headquarters, he puts through his call with a gentleman armed with a pistol standing by his side, listening to every word? Sometimes even that can be beaten. A correspondent telephoning from a certain war-torn capital under such circumstances once foiled the man with the pistol by interjecting into his conversation casual, innocent-sounding bits of American slang which conveyed to his colleague at the other end what he was trying to tell. He used, for example, the expression "grand"—which meant nothing to the censor—in such a way that the listener understood from his ingenious phrasing that he was saying 1,000 persons had been killed in the latest air raid. Within thirty minutes, the information was in the hands of American newspapers.

One of the chief weapons employed by certain foreign governments against correspondents who send out news distasteful to them is what might be called "post facto" censorship. A correspondent may be permitted to send out news without open censorship, and the news reaches its destination. But after it is published, he is called on the carpet, and if he cannot furnish indisputable proof, or even, in some cases, if the dispatch is highly distasteful to the government, he is summarily expelled from the country. Under these circumstances it is evident that American correspondents abroad, working under difficulties and against every obstacle which can be put in their path, are making every human effort to get the truth back home. So, as Mr. Young says in his book, if you read between the lines, and digest newspaper dispatches and periodicals with a fair background of knowledge of the fundamental policies of the nations involved, you will get a reasonably accurate picture of what is going on.

Louis F. Keemle is the cable editor of the United Press.

A Modern Icelandic Saga

I SEE A WONDROUS LAND. By Gudmundur Kamban. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by AGNES ROTHERY

WHOEVER enjoys Scandinavian literature will be delighted with this glowing and spirited novel laid in Iceland and Greenland in the tenth century and written by an Icelander. And many people who have never before been attracted to these far Northern regions will be genuinely interested in this book, because, while the current of the story flows between Iceland and Greenland, washing up occasionally upon the shores of Norway and Ireland, its greatest waves break against the shores of the New World—the Wondrous Land.

The names we have read in our school books—Erik the Red and Leif the Lucky—and those most of us have balked at pronouncing—Herjolfson, Karlsefni, and Gudleif—spring forth as shining, vital personalities, traversing the uncharted Atlantic in their dragon-prowed wooden vessels, discovering Labrador, Newfoundland, Vinland, Maine, the Hudson River, and Virginia, sailing away from them, returning to them, starting their colonies, loving, fighting, feasting, dying, building, buying, bartering, and always sailing—sailing—sailing.

Although Gudmundur Kamban bases his novel upon the sagas, the book is neither too long nor obviously weighted with research. Once it gets under way, it would be exciting to the least archeologically inclined and the parts dealing with the exploration and attempts at colonization will be absorbing to the least historically minded.

While it packs an astonishing amount of solid information into its uncongested pages—such as the impact of the newly introduced Christianity upon the ancient pagan beliefs—it is primarily a story of individuals, and the author does not hold up its swift movement in order to air his erudition. Time and distance assume quite different meanings in that world of almost a thousand years ago. But human motives and emotions are intimately comprehensible and the actual geographic background still remains sufficiently unchanged to give reality to the color and courage of a remote people.

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Useful Citizens

JACOB A. RIIS: Police Reporter, Reformer, Useful Citizen. By Louise Ware. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1938. $3.

NEIGHBORHOOD: My Story of Greenwich House. By Mary K. Simkhovitch. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

JACOB A. RIIS was one of the incorporators of the Coöperative Social Settlement Society, and thus a founder of Greenwich House, of which Mrs. Simkhovitch (born Mary Kingsbury) has been the moving spirit and head worker since its beginning at the turn of the century. Across Manhattan, on the East Side and farther down, is the Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House, so renamed in 1901. It lies near the old Mulberry Bend of unsavory memory, which Riis was instrumental in abolishing and for which was substituted one of the many small parks established in New York City largely through his efforts.

While the theme of the city neighborhood and of its reality in the lives of people is common to both these stories of useful citizenship, as told in the two books under review, they reflect differences of time and of temperament in approach to social problems and in methods of attack. Riis was an elementary angry man, so loving his fellow human beings that he hated their handicaps to decent living. He fought for them, and his chief weapon was publicity—his newspaper and magazine articles, his books and lectures. He was the forerunner in the nineties of the muckrakers of the 1900's. The title of his first book, "How the Other Half Lives," became a familiar phrase. He was almost as exuberant and robustious in action as his close friend and Mulberry Bend ally, Theodore Roosevelt, whom he somewhat resembled in looks. Miss Ware occasionally pauses in her narrative to marvel at his constantly cheerful spirit, somehow sustained in spite of the hardships and cruelties to which he had been subjected on his arrival in this country as an immigrant youth from Denmark, and in spite of his extreme sensitiveness to the sufferings and disabilities of others. His biographer has given us a vivid and engaging portrait of a great humanitarian.

The title of the book by Mrs. Simkhovitch is significantly chosen. "Neighborhood," with no article before it, suggests an idea rather than a mere place. "My Story" is subordinated to Greenwich House. Nevertheless, this is the personal story of a woman who has lived her own life deeply and broadly by living, participantly and observingly, the life of a particular neighborhood. It is a book rich in reminiscence and wisdom.

It is an emphasis on the neighborhood way of self-help and social action, even in a big city. Regardless of the limitations of the method, it is an emphasis on the democratic process in human betterment and civic improvement. A slow process, perhaps; but Mrs. Simkhovitch says, "My life at Greenwich House has taught me not to despise small things. It is wonderful how little seeds sprout."

By submerging herself "like a submarine" in one neighborhood of one city, by facing the changes and emergencies as they came, one after another, in that place, she grew familiar with the fundamental problems of urban life in her time all over the country. Here, within and just outside her door, were the awakenings to social injustice in the early years of her service; the hardships and exhilarations of the World War; the disillusionments after the war; the thoughtless, get-rich-quick 1920's; the Great Depression, with its effects not only on the pocketbooks but on the thinking of the people. Along the way, she has many illuminating comments to make. Incidentally, she has interesting things to say of the Greenwich Village of the writers and artists, both the real ones and the other kind. To read this book is an invitation to the living of a more complete life and an impulsion toward it.

Raymond G. Fuller has made many studies and written several books in various fields of social welfare.

Life on the Ice-Floes

THE SEALERS. By Peter Tutein. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by COMMANDER EDWARD ELLSBERG

FOR landlubbers, seeking literature of escape from farm, subway, or office, this book can be recommended. It is a plain tale of life among the ice-floes as actually experienced by the Norwegian crew of the *Quest,* a little vessel engaged in garnering such wealth of the seas as is represented by the hides of seals for my lady's winter wraps.

You'll learn all about sealing from it, but the probabilities are that you'll not get wrought up over the thrill of the chase while learning. Sealing seems to be a cold-blooded butchery of defenseless mammals unable to fight back—about as sporting a proposition as killing cows in a Chicago slaughterhouse.

This book gives an honest and uninviting picture of the sealer's life—his discomforts aboard a crowded little vessel, his long hours of arduous toil in freezing weather following up the riflemen across the ice-floes, skinning the slain seals; his back-breaking labor in dragging the skins across the broken ice to be hoisted aboard the *Quest;* his hazards in working in heaving ice, in slush, in water regardless of weather to bring in the fruits of the day's kill. The reader gets a strong impression that, regarding the sealing fleet at least, Samuel Johnson was right when he said that no one with sense enough to contrive to get himself into jail should be a sailor.

This is the story of a ship's crew which (excepting always the captain) starts out broke, works like serfs a whole season slaying seals among the polar floes above Norway, and comes back to spend its earnings in one night's carouse. Peter Tutein, whom Captain Schjelderup of the *Quest* once rescued from the floes off Greenland, tells it simply and sincerely.

Edward Ellsberg is the author of "Hell on Ice," a chronicle of Arctic exploration.

Government and Eugenic Reform

HEREDITY AND POLITICS. By J. B. S. Haldane. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by H. M. PARSHLEY

THE book under review is not just another book on eugenics; it is of more than common interest because its author is at once a biologist of respectable scientific standing and a radical in political belief, *i.e.,* one who favors a change from capitalism to socialism. The radicals have been for the most part opposed to eugenic reform, because (1) they dislike the idea of innate human inequality, (2) they cannot accept the correlations claimed to be demonstrable between grades of inherent human ability and existing social classes, and (3) they will not trust existing authorities with the administration of eugenic laws. Professor Haldane, as a radical, is not free from anti-eugenic emotional bias, according to his own admission; and, indeed, his book clearly owes its existence to that circumstance. But as a scientist he tries to base his discussion upon facts and to forward it by logical argument, making a gallant if on the whole a losing effort.

The author's first chapter, on the biology of inequality, contains much of interest, including a remarkably illuminating discussion of nature versus nurture, *i.e.,* heredity versus environment. In this section Professor Haldane begins his attack upon legalized eugenical sterilization. He does not like the idea of sterilization, and his main endeavor in this book—his chief purpose in writing it—is to oppose that method of reducing human defectiveness. In later chapters Professor Haldane considers the principles of heredity, the origin of hereditary diseases by mutation, the differential fertility of social classes, and the race problem. Very little is known about mutation, of course, and the author says very little. What he does do, in the third chapter, is to attack sterilization again, calling it "a piece of crude Americanism"—like prohibition. Throughout he insists that legal sterilization constitutes an assault on individual freedom; he favors "segregation," and seems to favor prohibition of marriage in case of hereditary defect and even between normal cousins!

The author objects also that sterilization may be dangerous to life in women, though "probably less than one percent" may die. And he says that the demand for sterilization argues "a certain state of mind." Further he offers the usual

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 210)

LOGAN P. SMITH—AFTERTHOUGHTS

Growing old is . . . a series of drops . . . from one ledge to another below it. But when we pick ourselves up we find that our bones are not broken; while level enough and not unpleasing is the new terrace that lies unexplored before us.

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dubious statistics showing how little good sterilization might do in the case of recessive defects, regardless of the obvious fact that defective parents, when not sterilized, are bound to produce many defective children and that they provide a hopeless environment for any normals that may appear among their offspring. Regarding innate racial differences Professor Haldane is very cautious, concluding that some physical traits may be completely characteristic but that psychological traits overlap.

Mr. Haldane presents a good many valuable facts and some scientific reasoning; but it is fair to say that in general his attitude, no less than that of the extreme eugenists, represents a "certain state of mind." No author can possibly write a reliable book dealing with sterilization unless he makes himself thoroughly acquainted with the results of eugenical sterilization in California. Extensive scientific reports of this work are readily available, but Professor Haldane makes only two or three passing references to minor aspects of the California experience, which should have been his chief source of factual knowledge. The facts of this experience are overwhelmingly in favor of sterilization.

H. M. Parshley is professor of biology at Smith College.

Organic Society

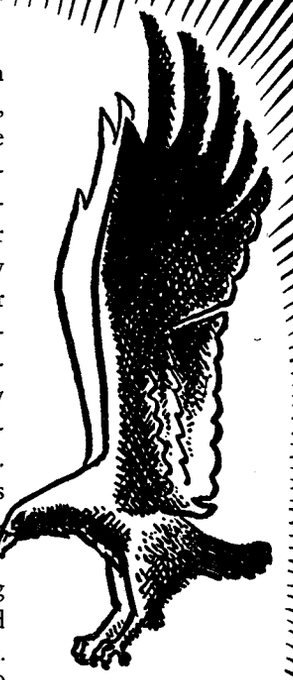
ELYSIAN FIELDS: A Dialogue. By Salvador de Madariaga. New York: Oxford University Press. 1938. $1.

Reviewed by JOHN C. DEWILDE

IN his latest book, Señor de Madariaga turns to fantasy. The immortal spirits of Goethe, Mary Stuart, Napoleon, Karl Marx, Voltaire, and George Washington converse together in the Elysian fields on the future of democracy and peace. The subject is dear to the author's heart, for it is substantially the same as the one treated in his last book, "Anarchy or Hierarchy." One does not need to read far before discovering that this Spanish publicist, who prides himself on being "a world-citizen by conviction," speaks through the voice of the tolerant Goethe.

De Madariaga is a liberal with conservative tendencies. He condemns the zealous and fanatic advocates of the communist or fascist political faiths, for they will "crush between them millions of people who do not care a row of pins about such dogmas." His solution is an organic society in which people will naturally fall into classes distinguished by different levels of ability, intelligence, and culture. If democracy, particularly that of America, is to survive, we shall have to "unlearn the tendency to see a machine in a human community" and learn the "value of inequality and of quality." Democracy must be led by an aristocracy, "a class of persons with vision for leadership and a spirit for sacrifice."

These ideas are sound in theory, but how are we to carry them out in practice? Can we really rely on natural selection to bring the best elements on top? The author provides no convincing answer to these questions.



If you've ever stood on the top of a hill, eyes straining, pulse quickening as you caught the first glimpse of the wild ducks making their seasonal, eternally magic migration, this is your book. If you've ever been gripped by the fascinating, savagely beautiful plunge of the hawk, this is your book. If, like many other readers of the *Saturday Review,* you were charmed by the excerpt about the kingbird which it recently published, you've had a taste of the solid enjoyment awaiting you in *Birds Against Men.* It is not merely a collection of experiences with birds and their lives. In it you will find shrewd observation and sensitive writing, blood-stirring drama and an understanding revelation of the secrets of an enchanted world and its kinship with the world of man. *Illustrated by Lynd Ward.* $2.50

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Feminine Fiction

THREE TO GET READY. By Margaret Herzog. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $2.

THE STRANGE WOMAN. By Sarah Elizabeth Rodger. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1938. $2.

ATTENTION: MISS WELLS. By Sylvia Paul Jerman. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1938. $2.

SEEDS OF TIME. By Ethel Doherty and Louise Long. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1938. $2.50.

A CHILD IN HER ARMS. By Louise Redfield Peattie. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1938. $2.

MRS. BLAIR. By Maud Keek. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by LUCIA ALZAMORA

HERE are six books written by women, for women, about women. The only possible exception to this rather sweeping statement is "Seeds of Time," by Ethel Doherty and Louise Long, whose principal character is a man. Most of these novels have already seen the light of day in one or the other of that well-known group of publications known as the Women's Magazines—a group whose editors have all an acknowledged and uncanny flair for knowing what the American woman in the large is amused and interested to read. So, then, what have we?

On the very lightest side there is "Three to Get Ready," by Margaret Herzog, and "The Strange Woman," by Sarah Elizabeth Rodger, as a close runner-up. Both of these books deal with one of the favorite reading pastures of the American housewife, which is New York society with a capital S, both have smooth, beautiful heroines, and both have leading characters called Terry, but there the resemblance ends. Miss Herzog, a mistress of glamour-stuff, writes along gayly, breathlessly, and quite formlessly, as though she actually hadn't a thought in her head, while Miss Rodger, who is a much better craftswoman, has a definite idea in her book. She is very much concerned indeed about the futility of her debutante's existence, her people do come to life occasionally, and though her situations are trite and her conclusions obvious, there is some indication that she may some day write for a more bookish public.

"A Child in Her Arms," by Louise Redfield Peattie, "Seeds of Time," by Ethel Doherty and Louise Long, and "Attention: Miss Wells," by Sylvia Paul Jerman are, each in its way, "serious books." "A Child in Her Arms" is an almost nauseating study of mother-hunger, mother-love, and mother-what-have-you which hasn't an atom of reality behind its cadenced prose. "Seeds of Time," the story of an idealistic boy inventor who makes good with the wrong woman beside him but wins through to his true love in the end, is probably the clumsiest and most ambitious of all these books. It goes on for three generations or from shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves, it makes some show of a very inept social consciousness, and, in spite of an evident sincerity and a large American canvas, it fails to turn out an interesting or successful book from any point of view at all. "Attention: Miss Wells," on the other hand, is probably the best of these various books. It is a nice, hard-boiled, staccato picture of office life from a confidential woman secretary's point of view, and while it is not brilliantly written, it manages to have an authenticity which many people—women in particular—will recognize and enjoy.

And now we come to "Mrs. Blair," by Maud Keck, which is a little of everything—China, San Francisco, a talented Mystery Woman, a fatal Russian with Tartar blood, intrigue, revolution, idealism, the works. It is a completely silly story, a strange hodge-podge oozing with a fine, fake glamour and getting absolutely nowhere, which probably doesn't matter. An escape story.

There is the lot of them, and while they are none of them the head-liners, they are a fairly comprehensive selection of what the very average American woman likes to read. The not very profound conclusion seems to be that she will take almost anything if it is written at least competently and isn't too hard and doesn't delve too deep.

Split Personality

STRANGERS. By Claude Houghton. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

THE idea of split personality seems to fascinate Mr. Houghton, and he uses it again and again in his novels. Unfortunately in each successive book he appears to be less able to deal with it effectively. In "I Am Jonathan Scrivener," his first novel, he at least managed to sustain interest and hold suspense up to the last chapter. It broke down at the end because the author had no solution for his own puzzle. This present tale goes on endlessly hinting at something and arriving at nothing, always apparently on the edge of a portentous statement as to the meaning of life but never enunciating anything of the slightest significance. So far as the story comes to anything it is the portrayal of a writer, a man who persists in seeing himself as the person he wanted to be so as to evade the knowledge of the man he actually is. He is happily married to a woman he loves, yet falls in love with a girl half his age who appeals to a different side of his nature from that which his wife attracts. For a considerable time he manages to keep up both relationships without inner conflict and without the discovery of his liaison by his wife, and when eventually its existence seems on the brink of exposure, and his two selves are at odds, he extricates himself from his perplexities by discovering that he loves neither woman. The author thereupon steps in and neatly ends all further complications.

A long section of the book is given over to describing a European tour which the lovers make with an amount of detail that would do credit to Baedeker and is like nothing so much as the chronicle with which a juvenile sugarcoats the pill of information on foreign lands.

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The New Books

Biography

SINABABA. By Elinor Mordaunt. Greystone Press. 1938. $2.75.

It may be remembered that a few years ago when Somerset Maugham's "Cakes and Ales" stirred up a tempest in a teapot it was answered by a weak rejoinder entitled "Gin and Bitters" by one "A. Riposte." That pseudonymous author was this Elinor Mordaunt who, however, makes no allusion to her ill-tempered book in the present autobiography. This last is a vivacious enough chronicle which follows the course of its author's life through her Victorian childhood in England, a youthful engagement which was ended by the death of her fiancé, an unhappy marriage and life in Mauritius, separation from her husband and a valiant struggle to make a livelihood for herself and her child in Australia and later in England, and finally authorship and recognition. Her work, and later her lecture tours, carried Mrs. Mordaunt to farflung parts of the world, and she writes of her experiences with animation and frankness. She met persons of importance in various walks of life, especially the literary, and her pages contain frequent vignettes, brief transcripts of conversations, and odds and ends of reminiscence. On the whole few of the figures she introduces emerge with any sharpness from a narrative that is an intensely personal one. Still, Mrs. Mordaunt's was a life sufficiently varied, and she writes of it with enough of unrestraint, to make her record extremely readable. Her book has the smoothness of execution we have come to expect from the English writer, and the kind of interest that inevitably attaches to the life story of a person of ability who has grown up under happy circumstances, and, bereft of them, sets out to conquer misfortune.

A. L.

Fiction

THE BENDING SICKLE. By Gerald Bullett. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

The nosegay flavor of this novel is immediately apparent in its physical appearance, which has all the charm of a Victorian Valentine. The central character is Lalage, born in an English country parsonage seventy years ago. When Lalage was twenty—that other-world twenty of basques and walks and dear mamma and girlish dreams—she published a novel. A smart, young, London firm, remembering the book in 1937, decides to republish it as a stunt, a derisive, sophisticated laugh at an earlier generation. They send a partner down to get permission of Lalage, now an old lady. And the reader is introduced to her life story.

In the first pages of "The Bending Sickle" Mr. Bullett writes, "The moderns . . . in place of the seventh commandment had written: 'Thou shalt not be sentimental!'" This is disarming, making it ungracious to say how sentimental this pleasant book really is. It is a sentimentality best suited to the late nineteenth century, with which the first half of the book deals; less effective is that part of Lalage's life which comes with her second marriage, at the time of the war. The second half of the book loses the easy, detailed pace which the first half sets. After the war there are more characters who do more, say more, go more places—but not so effectively.

"The Bending Sickle" is agreeable for its country flavor, its occasional humor, its tenderness, and the look of the lovely English land—rain and sun, flowers and crops, sheep and horses and cows. (Curiously, there is only one dog in the book.) And although it is characterized as the story of a happy marriage, it is Lalage's first, and unhappy, matrimonial adventure which makes the better reading.

F. W.

THE BROTHERS. By H. G. Wells. Viking. 1938. $1.50.

A prose conversation at midnight with the world we know tumbling down into the dark, the dawn and the weather of the dawn still too distant for guessing. It is all parable; fascist and red leaders in a Ruritanian civil war, brought together, prove to be twin brothers separated soon after birth, but possessing the same basic ideas and ideals. They strive and fail to lead their followers to common ground, die in the same hour, and the war, though outside the compass of the book, goes on to some bloody and muddled conclusion. The guess from this corner is that a younger Wells would have been less obvious in his symbolism than the lay figures who here stand for relatively simple things; and it is quite certain that the same younger Wells would have been more ready with some solution other than the testament of political despair with which the slightly fictionized pamphlet closes. The narrative has all the drive and interest associated with the name of the author.

F. P.

Miscellaneous

COMPLETE BOOK OF BALLETS. By Cyril W. Beaumont. Putnam. 1938. $6.

Here is a diverting book for anyone who is interested in ballet. It is an encyclopedia of ballets, so well arranged and with such amusing comment and

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careful cross reference that one can spend hours turning back and forth in it. Mr. Beaumont says simply in his introduction: "It is a collection of the stories of the principal ballets of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries grouped together in chronological order under their choreographers." What a painstaking labor it has been can be partly understood by looking at the number of ballets listed in the index: there are over six hundred of them. Only a person who like Mr. Beaumont had devoted most of his life to the dance, watching, collecting, writing, publishing, dealing in dance books, could have compiled this mass of information. After the account of each choreographer there is some comment, summing up his importance, and after the stories of most of the important ballets there are quotations from contemporary press criticisms. Mr. Beaumont has the knack of picking out just the amusing or significant details that one would like to hear.

This book should give American audiences a sense of the rich tradition to which ballet is heir, "a glimpse of that great panorama of choreographic achievement." It is impressive. The stories of the long ballets of the nineteenth century are not in the least boring; on the contrary they display a sure feeling for what is dramatically effective. Mr. Beaumont's complete grasp of his subject makes the mass of detail sink to its proper place in the larger line of the book. His enthusiasm for ballet repeatedly infects the reader. "The Complete Book of Ballets" is one of those surprising reference books which make good reading. E. G.

PERSONALS

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Double-Crostics: No. 211

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

					1-X	2-T	3-W	4-W	5-Z	6-N	7-O	8-H	9-V	10-P	11-E	12-F
	13-M	14-B	15-C		16-V	17-J	18-Z	19-Y	20-I	21-N	22-A	23-R		24-N	25-Q	26-M
27-D		28-G	29-E	30-A		31-B	32-D		33-B	34-I		35-G	36-X	37-W	38-D	
39-P	40-K	41-Y	42-S		43-G	44-D		45-B	46-I		47-V	48-F	49-R	50-Q	51-Y	52-S
53-I		54-T	55-F	56-W	57-Y	58-E	59-X		60-G	61-E		62-L	63-I	64-Q		65-R
66-K	67-E	68-S	69-D	70-W	71-F	72-J	73-M		74-T	75-I	76-Z	77-O	78-R	79-S	80-Q	
81-S	82-L	83-H	84-R	85-O	86-D	87-V	88-M	89-P		90-U	91-C	92-L		93-Q	94-P	95-M
	96-R	97-T	98-O	99-F	100-K		101-T	102-I	103-E	104-N	105-H	106-L	107-W	108-Y	109-M	110-P
	111-H	112-P	113-R	114-D	115-A	116-I	117-L		118-K	119-A	120-Q		121-A	122-L	123-C	
124-Y	125-O	126-N	127-D	128-Z	129-B	130-U	131-G	132-S	133-P		134-A	135-G	136-B		137-M	138-F
	139-X	140-C	141-I	142-R	143-S	144-J	145-V	146-T	147-U	148-F	149-O	150-H	151-K		152-V	153-J
154-D	155-O		156-N	157-G	158-R		159-B	160-C		161-B	162-P	163-E		164-X	165-Z	166-K
167-Y	168-F		169-I	170-M		171-U	172-A		173-V	174-S	175-B	176-C	177-H	178-D		

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Character in "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

B. Not yielding to reason.

C. Heroine of "Cyrano de Bergerac."

D. Female fop.

E. Drat! Darn! (U. S.).

F. Makes a disclosure.

G. Ship used by forces of Hel in Ragnarok (Norse).

H. Mentally acute.

I. Inversion of usual word order.

J. Decisive Napoleonic naval battle (1798).

K. Modern transliteration of word *Jehovah.*

L. Dedicatee of "Childe Harold."

M. Little hollow; dimple.

N. Character in "Cymbeline."

O. Author of "Duchess of Malfi."

P. Rudimentary sensation.

Q. Author of famous University farce (1615).

R. Striking.

S. One belonging to a declining age.

T. American author (1783-1859).

U. American humorist (1876—).

V. Devices for accomplishing an end.

W. Heads of abbeys for men.

X. Trifled.

Y. Magic horn of Roland.

Z. Pokes around.

WORDS

119	115	22	172	121	30	134				
14	31	33	159	45	175	129	161	136		
15	160	140	91	176	123					
38	114	154	178	86	44	32	27	69	127	
58	29	103	67	11	61	163				
148	12	71	138	168	55	48	99			
28	43	35	131	157	60	135				
83	8	111	105	150	177					
20	46	53	116	169	75	34	141	63	102	
17	144	72	153							
151	118	40	166	66	100					
82	106	92	62	122	117					
13	170	137	26	109	95	88	73			
6	24	156	126	104	21					
77	125	7	149	155	98	85				
94	89	39	162	112	133	10	110			
50	25	93	80	120	64					
142	158	96	23	113	84	78	65	49		
143	132	52	174	81	68	79	42			
2	97	101	146	54	74					
90	147	130	171							
9	47	87	145	16	173	152				
70	56	107	37	4	3					
164	36	59	139	1						
57	108	51	124	41	167	19				
5	76	165	128	18						

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The Evolution of Physics was published last week simultaneously by *The Cambridge University Press* in England, by *A. W. Sythoff's Uitgeversmaatschappij, N. V.*, in The Netherlands, and in The United States by —ESSANDESS

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE Friends of American Writers, of Chicago, have announced their 1938 Award of $1000 to William Maxwell's novel, *They Came Like Swallows.* This pleases the Q Associates, who were whooping it up for *They Came Like Swallows* when it was published last spring. The award was made at the Annual Awards Dinner of the F. of A. W. on March 30, citing the novel for "its original technique, its sympathetic portrayal of middlewestern family life, and its value as Americana." ☞Guggenheim Fellowships for 1938 have been awarded in literature to Mary M. Colum, author of *From These Roots;* R. P. Blackmur, for a projected book on Henry Adams; Dr. Leon Edel, for an edition of Henry James's unpublished plays; and to three novelists: Katherine Anne Porter (*Flowering Judas*), Clifford Dowdey (*Bugles Blow No More,* which has recently agitated our letter page), and August W. Derleth (*Still Is the Summer Night*). Other writers receiving fellowships include Walter Prescott Webb (*Divided We Stand*), Lewis Mumford, whose *Culture of Cities* is coming next week and whose next book after that will be *Personality and the Community.* ☞Fellowship-winning poets are Oscar Brynes, Carlyle Ferren MacIntyre, and Rolfe Humphries. ☞There are 58 fellowships in all, and the grants total $135,000. ☞Among various projects announced by fellowship workers is Allen Walker Read's for a Dictionary of "Britticisms." Mr. Read has been working under Sir William Craigie on the *Dictionary of American English,* and feels the need of a transatlantic counterpart.

☞The *Reader's Almanac* in last week's issue listed Paul de Kruif's *The Fight for Life* as the Book-of-the-Month Club selection for May; should have listed the co-selection, *The Flying Yorkshireman and Other Novellas* edited by Whit Burnett and Martha Foley of *Story.* ☞Longmans Green are doing an impressive job on *The Human Situation* by W. Macneile Dixon, published last fall but just now beginning to get the breaks. ☞Little Brown announces a $4500 Exile Prize Contest, in coöperation with the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom. Manuscripts, fiction or non-fiction, from 50,000 to 200,000 words, may be submitted by candidates of any nationality now in exile for political reasons, but all manuscripts must be in German. Associated in the contest are four foreign publishers. The judges will be Thomas Mann, Bruno Frank, Lion Feuchtwanger, Alfred Neumann, and Rudolph Olden. Closing date, October 1, 1938. ☞At the first Book and Author lunch, held last week under the auspices of the American Booksellers' Association, visitors voted on the question: "What book—new or old—have you enjoyed most in the past month?" Elmer Rice's *Imperial City* led the field.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE CASE OF THE SUBSTITUTE FACE *Erle Stanley Gardner* (Morrow: $2.)	Perry Mason and Sec-r't'ry Della, homeward bound from Hawaii, help damsel in distress and solve unusuálly cock-eyed crime.	Mason, cutting legal corners more perilously than ever, comes out tops in case that equals his best for action and dialogue.	Superlative
ACTS OF BLACK NIGHT *Kathleen Moore Knight* (Crime Club: $2.)	Storm-isolated island scene of killing, kidnapping, skull-thumping, and whimsically effective sleuthing of Elisha Macomber.	Doubled-barreled plot, colorful and cantankerous characters, a trifle too much sentiment, and unobtrusively convincing detective work.	Better than average
MURDERS NOT QUITE SOLVED *Alvin F. Harlow* (Messner: $3.) (Non-fiction)	Thirteen factual crimes —twelve domestic, one English — that for one reason and another still stump the gendarmes.	Interesting accounts of unfamiliar and half-forgotten killings, some of them peculiarly horrifying.	Good
COMETS HAVE LONG TAILS *Madeleine Johnston* (Crime Club: $2.)	Strangling of lovely Chinese girl, ward of American family, leads to four more deaths whilst newshawk Bradshaw hawkshaws hurriedly.	Tragic, tangled, and slightly tarnished intrigue unraveled skillfully with considerable violence. Conclusion upsets reader's preconceived notions.	Satisfactory
DEATH TALKS SHOP *Paul Haggard* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	Killer of plutocrat and dizzy blonde trailed through linguistic barrage by Mike Warlock and pix-man stooge.	Ingenious plot pretty nigh ruint by overdoses of bum slang, cheap wisecracks, and generally tiresome verbosity.	Corny

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